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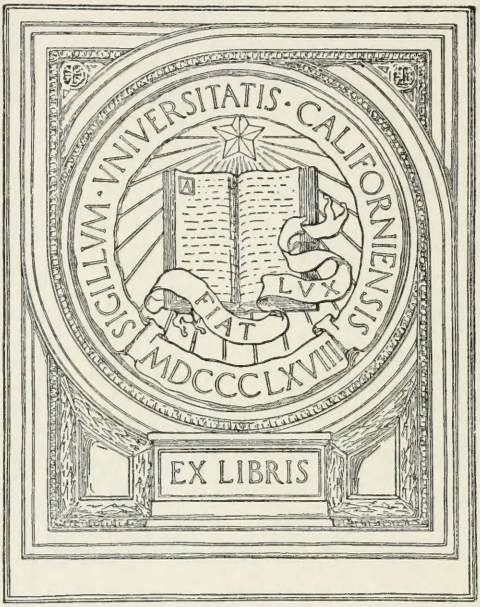

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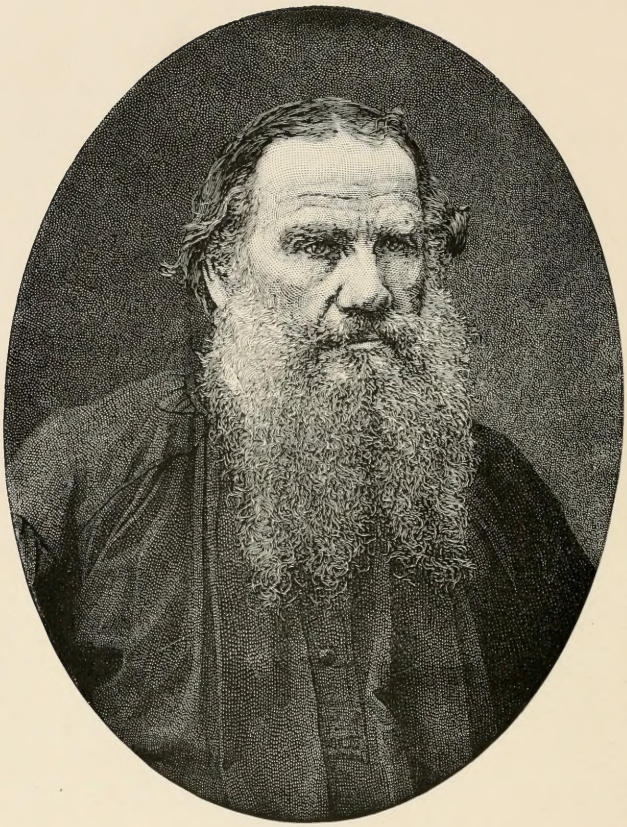

Лев Толстой

LIFE

BY

COUNT LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION

BY

ISABEL F. HAPGOOD

NEW YORK
THOMAS Y. CROWELL & CO.
13 ASTOR PLACE

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LIFE.

"MAN is only a reed, the feeblest in nature; but he is a thinking reed. The whole universe must not rise in arms to crush him. A vapor, a drop of water, suffices to kill him. But, if the entire universe were to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which slays him, because he knows that he is dying; and of the advantage which the universe possesses over him the universe knows nothing. Thus all our dignity consists in thought. It is that upon which we must take our stand, not upon space and duration. Let us, then, labor to think well; that is the principle of morals." — PASCAL.

"Two things fill my spirit with ever fresh and increasing wonder and awe, the oftener and the more steadfastly my thoughts occupy themselves therewith, — the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me. . . . The first begins from the place which I occupy in the outer world of sense, and extends the connection in which I stand to invisible space beyond the eye of man, with worlds on worlds, systems on systems, to their periodical movements in endless time, their beginning and continuance. The second begins with my unseen self, my personality, and places me in a world which has true eternity, but which is perceptible only to the understanding, and with which I am conscious of being, not, as in the former case, accidental, but in universal and indispensable connection."— KANT (Critique of Pure Reason, Conclusion).

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." — GOSPEL OF JOHN, xiii. 34.

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INTRODUCTION.

Let us picture to ourselves a man whose only means of livelihood is a mill. This man is the son and grandson of a miller, and knows thoroughly, by tradition, how to deal with every part of the mill, so that it shall grind well. This man, though ignorant of mechanics, adjusts all the parts of the mill, as he understands it, so that the product may be profitable and good, and that men may live and eat.

But it has chanced that this man has begun to reflect upon the construction of the mill, to hear some confused statements about its mechanism, and he has begun to observe what part is turned by what other part.

And, from the fly-wheel to the grindstone, from the grindstone to the mill-race, from the mill-race to the wheel, from the wheel to the gate, the dam, and the water, he has argued to the conclusion that he has clearly comprehended that the whole

matter lies in the dam and the river. And the man has rejoiced so greatly in this discovery of his that instead of scrutinizing, as heretofore, the quality of the flour which comes forth, instead of raising and lowering the stones, of shoeing them, of tightening and slackening the belt, he has begun to study the river. And his mill has been thrown entirely out of gear. People have begun to tell the miller that he is not behaving rightly. He has disputed and continued to reason about the river. And he has worked so much, so very much over this, he has disputed so much and so hotly with those who have proved to him the falsity of his premises, that he has, at last, become convinced that the river is the mill itself.

To every proof of the falsity of his course of reasoning, such a miller will reply: "No mill grinds without water. Consequently, in order to know the mill, it is requisite to know how to admit the water, to know the force of its current and whence it is derived; hence, in order to know the mill, it is necessary to know the river."

The miller cannot be logically controverted in his line of argument. The only means of dispelling his illusion lies in showing him that, in every

course of reasoning, the reasoning itself is not so important as the place occupied by the reasoning, i. e., that, in order to meditate fruitfully, it is necessary to know upon what to meditate first, and what afterwards; to demonstrate to him that sensible activity is distinguished from senseless activity only in this, that wise activity disposes its meditations in the order of their importance, deciding which reasoning must come first, second, third, tenth, and so on. But senseless activity consists in reasoning without order. It must be demonstrated to him that the order of this arrangement is not accidental, but that it depends upon the object for which the reasoning is conducted.

The object of all courses of reasoning determines the order in which the separate trains of thought must be arranged in order to be understood.

And reasoning not bound together by a common aim of all the arguments is foolish, no matter how logical it may be.

The aim of the miller consists in producing good flour, and this aim, if he will keep it in view, will determine for him the most unquestionable regu-

larity and order of sequence for his reasoning about the millstones, the wheel, the dam, and the river.

But, without this relation to the aim of his reasoning, the miller's arguments, no matter how fine and logical they may be, will be inherently irregular, and, what is the principal consideration, vain; they will be like the reasoning of Kifa Mokeevitch,[1] when he argued as to what should be the thickness of the shell of an elephant's egg, if elephants were produced from the egg, like birds. And such, in my opinion, are the arguments of our contemporary science about life.

Life is the mill which man desires to investigate. The mill is required to grind well, life is necessary only in order that it may be good. And this branch of investigation man cannot abandon for a single moment with impunity. If he does abandon it, his deliberations infallibly lose their place, and become like the reasoning of Mokeevitch as to how much powder would be required to break the shell of an elephant's egg.

Man studies life only in order that it may

[1] An incoherent reasoner, introduced in Part Second of Gogol's "Dead Souls." — *Trans.*

become better. In this manner those men study life who have advanced humanity in the path of knowledge. But, by the side of these true teachers and benefactors of humanity, there always have existed, and there exist now, reasoners who have abandoned the aim of reasoning, and who, in its stead, investigate the question as to the origin of life, — as to why the mill turns. Some assert that it is by reason of the water; others, that it is in consequence of the arrangement. The dispute waxes hot, and the subject of discussion moves further and further away, and is completely replaced by utterly foreign topics.

There is an ancient jest regarding the dispute of a Jew and a Christian. The story runs that the Christian, replying to the confused subtleties of the Jew, slapped the latter on his bald pate with his palm, so that it cracked, and put the question: "Did that come from the pate or the palm?" And the dispute about faith was replaced by a fresh and insoluble problem.

Something of the same sort has been in progress, since the most ancient times, by the side of men's true wisdom, and in connection with the question about life.

Discussions are known to have arisen in the most ancient times as to whence comes life? from an immaterial beginning, or from the combination of various materials? And these discussions continue at the present day, so that no end to them can be foreseen, because the aim of all discussion has been abandoned and life is reasoned upon apart from its aim. And by the word life — life itself is not understood, but that from which it proceeds, or that which accompanies it.

Now, not only in scientific books, but even in conversation, when life is mentioned, the discussion is not about what we all know, — about life; about those sufferings which I fear and which I hate, and those joys and pleasures which I desire; but of something which came into existence, perhaps, through the play of chance according to some physical laws, and, perhaps, because it possesses in itself some secret cause.

The word "life" is ascribed to something contestable, which does not contain within itself the chief signs of life: the consciousness of suffering and of enjoyment, and of aspirations towards goodness.

"La vie est l'ensemble des fonctions, qui resiste à la mort. La vie est l'ensemble des phénomènes, qui se succédent pendant un temps limité dans un être organisé." Life is the sum total of the functions which resist death. Life is the sum total of the phenomena which follow each other in the course of a limited time in an organic being.

Setting aside the inaccuracy, the tautology, with which these definitions are filled, the substance of them all is identical, namely, — that which all men in common understand incontestably by the word "life" is not defined by them, but some processes or other which accompany life and other phenomena.

Under the majority of these heads comes the activity of the crystal in process of formation; under some comes the activity of abandonment, decomposition, and under all comes the life of each separate cell in my body, for which there exists nothing that is either good or bad. Some of the processes going on in the crystal, in the protoplasm, in the germ of the protoplasm, in the cells of my body and of other bodies, are called by a word which is indissolubly connected

in me with the consciousness of an aspiration towards my welfare.

Arguments upon some of the conditions of life, as life itself, are precisely the same as the argument about the river, as the actual mill. These arguments are, possibly, very necessary for some purpose or other. But they do not touch the subject which they intend to discuss. And, therefore, all deductions as to life drawn from such arguments cannot fail to be deceptive.

The word "life" is very short and very clear, and every one understands what it signifies, and we are bound always to employ it in that sense which is comprehensible to all. Surely this word is comprehensible to every one, not because it is very accurately defined by other words and ideas, but, on the contrary, because this word expresses a fundamental idea, from which are deduced many, if not all other ideas, and therefore, in order to make deductions from this idea, we are bound, first of all, to accept that idea in its central signification, which is incontrovertible by all. And this, it seems to me, has been neglected by the contending parties, in connection with the idea of life. It has come to pass that the fundamental

idea of life, taken at first, not in its central significance, in consequence of disputes about it, and departing ever more and more from its fundamental meaning, accepted by every one, has finally lost the thought upon which it is based, and has received another meaning, which does not correspond to it. This has come to pass, that the very centre from which the figure was drawn has been deserted and carried to another point. Men dispute over the question, whether life lies in the cell or in the protoplasm, or, still lower, in inorganic matter.

But, before disputing, we should ask ourselves, have we a right to attribute a comprehension of life to a cell?

We say, for instance, that there is life in the cell, that the cell is the living being. But the fundamental idea of human life and the idea of life which is contained in the cell are two ideas which are not only utterly different, but which cannot be united. One idea excludes the other. I discover that the whole of my body, without exception, consists of cells. These cells, I am informed, possess the same sort of life as myself, and are precisely such living beings as

myself, but I acknowledge that I am alive only because I am conscious that I, with all the cells which constitute me, am one living, indivisible being. But I am informed that the whole of me, without exception, is composed of living cells. To whom am I to attribute the property of life, to the cells or to myself? If I admit that the cells have life, then, from the idea of life, I must obtain the chief indication of my life, the consciousness that I am a single, living being; but if I do not admit that I have life as an independent being, then it is evident that I can by no means attribute that property to the cells of which my body is composed, and of whose consciousness I know nothing.

Either I am alive, and there are portions of me which are not alive, called cells, or there exists a throng of living cells, and my consciousness of life is not life, but merely an illusion.

For we do not say that there is in the cells anything that we call *bryzn*, but we say that there is life. We say "life" because by this word we understand not some indefinite x, but a thoroughly well defined dimension, which we all alike know, and know only of ourselves as a con-

sciousness of our own unit of body, indivisible with itself, and hence such an idea is inapplicable to those cells of which my body is composed.

In whatever investigations or observations a man engages, he is bound by every word to mean that which all indisputably understand alike, and not some idea or other which is necessary to him, but wholly incompatible with its fundamental meaning, comprehensible to all.

If the word "life" can be used so that it designates, indifferently, both the property of an object and entirely different properties of all its component parts, as is done in the case of the cell and the animal composed of cells, then other words may also be employed in the same way. We may say, for example, that, as all words are composed of letters, and letters are made up of lines, the drawing of lines is the same as the exposition of thoughts, and that, therefore, lines may be called thoughts.

The most ordinary phenomenon in the scientific world is to hear and to read discussions upon the origin of *life* from the play of physical, mechanical powers.

But it is doubtful if the majority of the scientific people hold to this — I find it difficult to express it — opinion which is not an opinion, this paradox which is not a paradox, but rather a jest or a riddle.

It asserts that life proceeds from the play of physical and mechanical forces, of those physical forces which we have called physical and mechanical merely in contradistinction to the idea of life.

It is evident that the word "life," improperly applied to ideas which are foreign to it, departing further and further from its fundamental signification, has abandoned its centre to such a degree that life is already assumed to be where, according to our conceptions, life cannot exist. The assumption is similar to that of a circle or sphere whose centre should lie outside of its periphery.

In fact, life, which I cannot imagine as otherwise than as a striving from evil towards good, proceeds from those regions where I can discern neither good nor evil. It is evident that the centre of the conception of life has been entirely shifted. Moreover, following up the investigations into that something called life, I even see that these investigations touch hardly any of the

ideas with which I am acquainted. I perceive an entire series of new ideas, and of words which possess a conventional meaning in the scientific jargon, but which have nothing in common with existing ideas.

The idea of life which is familiar to me is not understood as every one understands it, and the ideas deduced from it do not accord with the usual ideas, but present themselves as new, conventional conceptions, having received manufactured names to correspond.

The human language is becoming more and more supplanted in scientific investigations, and, instead of words, the means of expression of existing objects and ideas, a scientific volapük reigns, distinguished from the real volapük only in this, that the real volapük calls existing objects and ideas by universal words, but the scientific volapük calls, by words which do not exist, ideas which do not exist.

The sole means of mental communication between men is the word, and, in order that this communication may be possible, it is necessary so to employ words that every word shall infallibly evoke, in all, corresponding and accurate ideas.

But if it be possible to use words at random, and by those words to understand whatever occurs to us, it is better not to speak, but to indicate everything by signs.

I admit that to settle the laws of the world from the deductions of the mind alone, without experience or observation, is a false and unscientific course — that is to say, it cannot afford true knowledge; but will it not be still worse to study the phenomena of the world by experiments and observations, and at the same time be guided in these experiments and observations by ideas which are not fundamental and common to all men, but conventional, and to describe the results of these experiments in words to which a varying significance can be attached? The best apothecary's shop is productive of the greatest injury if the labels are pasted on the bottles, not according to their contents, but to suit the convenience of the apothecary.

But men say to me: "Science does not set itself the task of examining all the combinations of life (including within it, will, the desire for good, and the spiritual world); it makes only an abstract from the ideas of life of those apparitions

which are subject to its experimental investigations.

This would be very good and lawful. But we know that this is not at all the case in the representations of the scientific men of our times. If, first of all, the idea of life were admitted in its central significance, in that in which all understand it, it would afterwards be clearly settled that science, having made from this idea an abstraction of all its sides, except of the one subject to external observation, looks upon the phenomena from that side only, for which it has its own peculiar methods of investigation, and it would all be very well, and it would have been quite another thing; then the place which science would have occupied, and the results to which we should have arrived on the foundation of science, would have been entirely different. That which is must be said, and we must not conceal that which we all know. Do we not know that the majority of experimental scientific investigators are fully convinced that they are studying not one side only of life, but all life?

Astronomy, mechanics, physics, chemistry, and all the other sciences together, and separately,

work over the side of life appertaining to each, without coming to any results as to life in general. Only during the period of their savagery, that is to say, of their indistinctness, their ill-defined state, did some of these sciences endeavor from their own point of view to grasp all the phenomena of life, and became confused, through inventing for themselves new ideas and new words. Thus it was with astronomy when it was astrology, thus it was with chemistry when it was alchemy. The same thing now takes place with that experimental science of evolution, which, surveying one side or several sides of life, brings forward a claim to the study of all life.

Men with such a false view of science by no means wish to admit that only a few sides of life are subject to their investigation, but they affirm that all life, with all its phenomena, will be studied by them, by the path of external experiment. "If," say they, "*psychics*" (they are fond of this indefinite word of their volapük) "are still unknown to us, they will yet be known to us. By following up one side or several sides of the phenomena of life, we shall learn to know all sides. That is to say, in other words, that, if we gaze very long and

earnestly upon an object from one side, we shall see the object from all sides, and even from its interior."

Amazing as is so strange a doctrine, — explicable only by the fanaticism of superstition, — it does exist, and, like every whimsical, fanatical doctrine, it produces its destructive effect, directing the activity of human thought in a false and frivolous path. Conscientious toilers perish, having consecrated their lives to the study of an almost utterly worthless thing. The material forces of people perish, from being turned in a direction which is useless. The young generations perish, being directed to the same idle activity as Kifa Mokeevitch, erected into the rank of the highest service to humanity.

It is generally said: science studies life from all sides. And here lies the point, that every subject has as many sides as there are radii in a sphere, that is to say, they are innumerable, and it is impossible to study from all sides, but one must know from which side it is most important and necessary, and from which it is less important and less useful. As it is impossible to approach an object from all sides at once, so it is impossible to

study the phenomena of life from all sides and at once. And, willy-nilly, an order of succession is established. And herein lies the gist of the matter. But this order of succession is furnished only by an understanding of life.

Only a right understanding of life imparts the proper significance and direction to science in general, and to each science in particular, regulating them according to the importance of their significance in connection with life. But if the understanding of life is not such as is implanted within all of us, then science itself will be erroneous.

Not what we call science determines life, but our idea of life determines what science should acknowledge. And therefore, in order that science may be science, the question must first be settled as to what is and what is not science, and to this end our idea of life must be elucidated. I will express the whole of my thought frankly; we all know the fundamental dogma of faith of this false experimental science. Matter and its energy exist! Energy moves; mechanical movement is converted into molecular; molecular movement is expressed by heat, electricity, nervous, and

brain movement. And all the phenomena of life, without exception, present themselves as relations of energy. Everything is thus beautiful, simple, clear, and, chief of all, convenient. So that, if there is nothing of all that which we so much desire, and which so simplifies our life, then all this must be invented in some manner or other.

And here is the whole of my audacious thought : the chief portion of the energy, zeal, and activity of experimental science is founded on the desire to invent everything that is necessary for the firm establishment of so comfortable a representation.

In all the activity of this science one beholds, not so much a desire to investigate the phenomena of life as the one ever-present anxiety to prove the veracity of its fundamental tenet, that force is wasted on experiments to explain the origin of organic from inorganic and psychical activity from the processes of organism. The organic does not pass into the inorganic ; let us seek at the bottom of the sea, we shall find a bit of stuff, which we will call the kernel, a monera.

And it is not there ; we shall believe that it is to be found, — the more so as a whole series of

centuries stand at our service, into which we can thrust everything that ought to be in our creed, — but which is not there in reality.

It is the same with the transition from organic to psychical activity. It is not yet? But we believe that it will be, and we bend all the powers of our intelligence to prove the possibility of this at last.

Disputes as to that which does not concern life, namely, as to whence life proceeds — whether it is animism or vitalism, or, again, the idea of some special force — have concealed from men the principal question of life, — that question without which the conception of life loses its coherence, and have gradually led scientific men — those who should guide others — into the position of a man who should walk along, and even hasten his steps, but who should have forgotten whither he was going.

Possibly, I am deliberately endeavoring not to see the vast results afforded by science in its present course? But, surely, no results can justify a false course? Let us concede the impossible, — that all that contemporary science desires to know of life, and of which it asserts (though

it does not believe this itself) — that all this will be revealed; let us concede that all has been revealed, that all is as clear as day. It is clear how organic material arises from inorganic through physical energy; it is clear how physical energy is converted into feeling, will, thought, and that all this is known not only to students in the gymnasiums, but to village school-boys.

I am aware that such and such thoughts and feelings proceed from such and such movements. Well, and what then? Can I or can I not be guided by these movements, in order to arouse in myself these and other thoughts; the question as to how I must awaken in myself and in others thoughts and feelings remains not only unsettled, but even untouched.

I know that scientific men do not trouble themselves to answer this question. The solution of this problem seems to them very simple, as the solution of a difficult problem always seems to a man who does not understand it. The answer to the question, how to regulate our life when it is in our power, seems very easy to men of science. They say: Regulate it so that people may satisfy their wants; science provides means, in the first

place, for the proper determination of wants, and, in the second, means to produce so easily and in such abundance that all wants can be easily satisfied, and then people will be happy.

But if we inquire what they call needs, and where lie the limits of needs, they simply reply: "Science — that is what science is for, to portion them out into physical, mental, æsthetic, even moral, and plainly to define what needs are legitimate and in what measure they are illegitimate. It will define this in course of time." But if they are asked how one must guide one's self in the decision as to the legitimacy and illegitimacy of needs, they reply boldly: "By the study of the needs." But the word *need* has only two meanings: either a condition of existence, and the conditions of existence of every object are innumerable in quantity, and hence all the conditions cannot be studied, or the need of happiness for human beings can be known and determined only by consciousness, and are therefore even less susceptible of investigation by contemporary science.

There is an institution, a corporation, an assembly of some sort, which is infallible, and which is

called science. It will determine all this in course of time.

Is it not evident that all this settlement of the question is merely a paraphrase of the kingdom of the Messiah, in which the part of the Messiah is played by science, and that, for the sake of having the explanation explain anything, it is necessary to believe in the dogmas of science as indisputably as the Hebrews believe in the Messiah, which is what the orthodox scientists do, with this difference only, that the orthodox Jew, representing to himself the Messiah as the envoy of God, can believe that all that the Messiah will establish by his power will be excellent, but the orthodox believer in science cannot, from the nature of things, believe that by means of the external investigation of needs the chief and only question concerning life can be decided?

LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTION OF HUMAN LIFE.

Every man lives only for his own good, for his personal welfare. If man feels no desire for happiness, he is not even conscious that he is alive. Man cannot imagine life without the desire for happiness. To live is, for every man, the same thing as to desire and to attain bliss; to desire and to attain bliss is synonymous with living. Man is conscious of life only in himself, only in his own personality, and hence, at first, man imagines that the bliss which he desires for himself personally is happiness, and nothing more.

At first, it seems to him that he is truly alive, and he alone.

The life of other beings seems to him not in

the least like his own. He imagines it as merely the semblance of life. Man only observes the life of other beings, and learns from observation only that they are alive. Man knows about the life of other beings when he is willing to think of them, but he knows of his own, he cannot for a single moment cease to be conscious that he lives, and hence real life appears to every man as his own life only, while the life of other beings about him seems to him to be merely a condition of his own existence. If he does not desire evil to others, it is only because the sight of the sufferings of others interferes with his happiness. If he desires good to others, it is not at all the same as for himself — it is not in order that the person to whom he wishes good may be well placed, but only in order that the happiness of other beings may augment the welfare of his own life. Only that happiness in this life is important and necessary to a man which he feels to be his own, i. e., his own individual happiness.

And behold, in striving for the attainment of this, his own individual welfare, man perceives that his welfare depends upon other beings. And, upon watching and observing these other beings,

man sees that all of them, both men and even animals, possess precisely the same conception of life as he himself. Each one of these beings, precisely as in his own case, is conscious only of his own life, and his own happiness, considers his own life alone of importance, and real, and the life of all other beings only as a means to his individual welfare. Man sees that every living being, precisely like himself, must be ready, for the sake of his petty welfare, to deprive all other beings of greater happiness and even of life.

And, having comprehended this, man involuntarily makes this calculation, that if this is so, and he knows that it is indubitably so, then, not one or not ten beings only, but all the innumerable beings in the world, for the attainment, each of his own object, are ready every moment to annihilate him, that man for whom alone life exists. And, having apprehended this, man sees that his personal happiness, in which alone he understands life, is not only not to be easily won by him, but that it will assuredly be taken from him.

The longer a man lives, the more firmly is this conviction confirmed by experience, and the man perceives that the life of the world in which he

shares is composed of individualities bound together, desirous of exterminating and devouring each other, not only cannot be a happiness for him, but will, assuredly, be a great evil.

But, nevertheless, if the man is placed in such favorable conditions that he can successfully contend with other personalities, fearing nothing for his own, both experience and reason speedily show him, that even those semblances of happiness which he wrests from life, in the form of enjoyment for his own personality, do not constitute happiness, and are but specimens of happiness as it were, vouchsafed him merely in order that he may be the more vividly conscious of the suffering which is always bound up with enjoyment.

The longer man lives, the more plainly does he see that weariness, satiety, toils, and sufferings become ever greater and greater, and enjoyments ever less and less.

But this is not all. On beginning to become conscious of a decline of strength, and of ill-health, and gazing upon ill-health, age, and the death of others, he perceives this also in addition, that even his existence, in which alone he recognizes real, full life, is approaching weakness, old age, and

death, with every hour, with every movement; that his life, besides being subject to thousands of chances of annihilation from other beings warring with him, and from ever increasing sufferings, is, in virtue of its very nature, nothing else than an incessant approach to death; to that condition in which together with the life of the individual will, assuredly, be annihilated every possibility of any personal happiness. The man perceives that he, his own personality, is that in which alone he feels life, that all he does is to struggle with those with whom it is impossible to struggle — with the whole world; that he is in search of enjoyments which give only the semblances of happiness, and which always terminate in sufferings, and he wishes to hold back life, which it is impossible to hold back. The man perceives that he himself, his own personality, that for which, alone, he desires life and happiness, can have neither life nor happiness. And that which he desires to have — life and happiness — is possessed only by those beings who are strangers to him, whom he does not feel, and cannot feel, and of whose existence he cannot know and does not wish to know.

That which for him is the most important of all, and which alone is necessary to him, that which — as it seems to him — alone possesses life in reality, his personality, that which will perish, will become bones and worms, is not he; but that which is unnecessary for him, unimportant to him, all that world of ever changing and struggling beings, that is to say, real life, will remain, and will exist forever. So that the sole life which is felt by man, and which evokes all this activity, proves to be something deceptive and impossible; but the inward life, which he does not love, which he does not feel, of which he is ignorant, is the one real life.

That of which he is not conscious, — that alone possesses those qualities of which he would fain be the sole possessor. And this is not that which presents itself to a man in the evil moments of his gloomy moods, this is not a representation which it is possible for him not to have, but this is, on the contrary, such a palpable, indubitable truth, that if this thought once occurs to man, or if others explain it to him, he can never again free himself from it, he can never more force it out of his consciousness.

[1] CHAPTER II.

THE SOLE AIM OF LIFE.

The sole aim of life, as it first presents itself to man, is the happiness of himself as an individual, but individual happiness there cannot be ; if there were anything resembling individual happiness in life, then that life in which alone happiness can exist, the life of the individual, is borne irresistibly, by every movement, by every breath, towards suffering, towards evil, towards death, towards annihilation.

And this is so self-evident and so plain that every thinking man, old or young, learned or unlearned, will see it.

This argument is so simple and natural that it presents itself to every reasoning man, and has

[1] The contradiction of life has been known to mankind from the most ancient times. The enlighteners of mankind expounded to men the definition of life, resolving it into an inward contradiction, but the Scribes and Pharisees conceal it from the people.

been known to mankind ever since the most ancient times.

"The life of man as an individual, striving only towards his own happiness, amid an endless number of similar individuals, engaged in annihilating each other and in annihilating themselves, is evil and absurdity, and such real life cannot be." This is what man has been saying to himself from the most ancient times down to the present day, and this inward inconsistency of the life of man was expressed with remarkable force and clearness by the Indians, and the Chinese, and the Egyptians, and the Greeks, and the Jews, and from the most ancient times the mind of man has been directed to the study of such a happiness for man as should not be cancelled by the contest of beings among themselves, by suffering and by death. In the increasingly better solution of this indubitable, unavoidable contest, by sufferings and by death of the happiness of man, lies the constant movement in advance from that time when we know his life.

From the most ancient times, and among the most widely varying peoples, the great teachers of mankind have revealed to men more and more

the clear definitions of life, solving its inward contradictions, and have pointed out the true happiness and true life which is proper to men.

And, since the position of all men in the world is identical, since the contradictions of his strivings after his personal welfare and the consciousness of his powerlessness are identical for every man, all the definitions of true happiness of life, and, hence, of the true revelation to men by the grandest minds of humanity, are identical.

"Life is the diffusion of that light which, for the happiness of men, descended upon them from heaven," said Confucius, six hundred years before Christ.

"Life is the peregrination and the perfection of souls, which attain to greater and ever greater bliss," said the Brahmins of the same day.

"Life is the abnegation of self, with the purpose of attaining blessed Nirvana," said Buddha, a contemporary of Confucius.

"Life is the path of peacefulness and lowliness, for the attainment of bliss," said Loa-dzi, also a contemporary of Confucius.

"Life is that which God breathed into man's nostrils, in order that he, by fulfilling his law,

might receive happiness," says the Hebrew sage, Moses.

"Life is submission to the reason, which gives happiness to man," said the Stoics.

"Life is love towards God and our neighbor, which gives happiness to man," said Christ, summing up in his definition all those which had preceded it.

Such are the definitions of life, which, thousands of years before our day, pointing out to men real and indestructible bliss, in the place of the false and impossible bliss of individuality, solve the contradictions of human life and impart to it a reasonable sense.

It is possible not to agree with these definitions of life, it is possible to assume that these definitions can be expressed more accurately and more clearly; but it is impossible not to see that these definitions, equally with the acknowledgment of them, do away with the inconsistencies of life, and, replacing the aspiration for an unattainable bliss of individuality, by another aspiration, for a happiness indestructible by suffering and death, impart to life a reasonable sense. It is impossible not to see this also, that these definitions,

being theoretically correct, are confirmed by the experience of life, and that millions and millions of men, who have accepted and who do accept such definitions of life, have, in fact, proved, and do prove, the possibility of replacing the aspiration towards individual welfare by an aspiration towards another happiness, of a sort which is not to be destroyed by suffering or death.

But, in addition to those men who have understood and who do understand the definitions of life, revealed to men by the great enlighteners of humanity, and who live by them, there always have been and there are now many people who, during a certain period of their life, and sometimes their whole life long, lead a purely animal existence, not only ignoring those definitions which serve to solve the contradictions of human life, but not even perceiving those contradictions which they solve. And there always have been and there now exist among those people men who, in consequence of their exclusively external position, regard themselves as called upon to guide mankind, and who, without themselves comprehending the meaning of human life, have taught and do teach other people life, which they

themselves do not understand ; to the effect that human life is nothing but individual existence.

Such false teachers have existed in all ages, and exist in our day also. Some confess in words the teachings of those enlighteners of mankind, in whose traditions they have been brought up, but, not comprehending their rational meaning, they convert these teachings into supernatural revelations as to the past and future life of men, and require only the fulfilment of ceremonial forms.

This is the doctrine of the Pharisees, in the very broadest sense, i. e., of the men who teach that a life preposterous in itself can be amended by faith in a future life, obtained by the fulfilment of external forms.

Others, who do not acknowledge the possibility of any other life than the visible one, reject every marvel and everything supernatural, and boldly affirm that the life of man is nothing but his animal existence from his birth to his death. This is the doctrine of the Scribes — of men who teach that there is nothing preposterous in the life of man, any more than in that of animals.

And both the former and the latter false prophets, in spite of the fact that the teaching of

both is founded upon the same coarse lack of understanding of the fundamental inconsistency of human life, have always been at enmity with each other, and are still at enmity. Both these doctrines reign in our world, and, contending with each other, they fill the world with their dissensions — by those same dissensions concealing from men those definitions of life which reveal the path to the true happiness of men, and which were given to men thousands of years ago.

The Pharisees, not comprehending this definition of life, which was given to men by those teachers in whose traditions they were brought up, replace it with their false interpretations of a future life, and, in addition to this, strive to conceal from men the definition of life of other enlighteners of humanity, by presenting the latter to their disciples in the coarsest and harshest aspect, assuming that, by so doing, they will uphold the absolute authority of that doctrine upon which they found their interpretation.[1]

[1] The unity of the rational idea of the definition of life by other enlighteners of mankind does not present itself to them as proof of the truth of their teaching, since it injures faith in the senseless, false interpretations with which they replace the substance of doctrine.

And the Scribes, not even suspecting in the teachings of the Pharisees those intelligent grounds from which they took their rise, flatly reject all doctrines, and boldly affirm that all these doctrines have no foundation whatever, but are merely remnants of the coarse customs of ignorance, and that the forward movement of mankind consists in not putting any questions whatever to one's self, concerning life, which overleap the bounds of the animal existence of man.

CHAPTER III.

THE ERROR OF THE SCRIBES.

And, marvellous to relate! the fact that all the teachings of the great minds of mankind so startled men by their grandeur that the rude populace attributed to them, for the most part, a supernatural character, and accepted their authors as demi-gods, the very fact which serves as the chief indication of the importance of these doctrines, that very fact serves the Scribes, so they think, as their best proof of the incorrectness and antiquated character of these doctrines.

The fact that the insignificant teachings of Aristotle, Bacon, Comte, and others remained, and will always remain, the property of a small number of their readers and admirers, and can, on account of their falsity, never influence the masses, and hence were never subjected to superstitious distortions and excrescences, — this mark of their insignificance is recognized as a proof of

their truth. But the teachings of the Brahmins, of Buddha, of Zoroaster, Loa-dzi, Confucius, Isaiah, and Christ are accounted superstitious and erroneous, merely because these teachings have effected a change in the lives of millions.

The fact that millions of men have lived, and do still live, according to these superstitions, because even in their mutilated form they furnish men with answers to questions about true happiness, the fact that these doctrines not only are shared by, but serve as a foundation for the thoughts of the best men of all ages, and that the theories professed by the Scribes alone are shared only by themselves, are always contested, and sometimes do not live ten years, and are forgotten as quickly as they were evolved, does not disturb them in the least.

On no point does that false direction of science followed by contemporary society express itself with such warmth as on the place which is held in this society by the doctrines of those great teachers of life by which mankind has lived and developed, and by which it still lives and develops itself: it is affirmed in the calendars, in the department of statistical information, that the

creeds now professed by the inhabitants of this globe number one thousand. Among the list of these creeds are reckoned Buddhism, Brahmanism, Confucianism, Taosism, and Christianity. There are a thousand creeds, and the people of our day believe this implicitly. There are a thousand creeds, they are all nonsense — why study them? And the men of our time consider it a disgrace if they do not know the latest apothegms of wisdom of Spencer, Helmholtz, and others; but of Brahma, Buddha, Confucius, Mentizus, Loa-dzi, Epictetus, and Isaiah they sometimes know the names, and sometimes they do not even know that much. It never enters their heads that the creeds professed in our day number not one thousand, but three, in all: the Chinese, the Indian, and the European-Christian (with its offshoot, Mahometanism), and that the books pertaining to these faiths can be purchased for five rubles, and read through in two weeks, and that in these books, by which all mankind has lived and now lives, with the exception of seven per cent, almost unknown to us, is contained all human wisdom, all that has made mankind what it is. But, not only is the populace ignorant of these

teachings; the learned men are not acquainted with them, unless it is their profession; philosophers by profession do not consider it necessary to glance into these books.

And why, indeed, study those men who have solved the inconsistency of his life admitted by the sensible man, and have defined true happiness and the life of men?

The wise men, not understanding this contradiction or inconsistency, which constitutes the beginning of intelligent life, boldly assert that there is no contradiction, because they do not perceive it, and that the life of man is merely his animal existence.

Those who do see understand and define that which they see before them — the blind man fumbles before him with a cane, and asserts that nothing exists except that which the touch of his cane reveals to him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TEACHING OF THE WISE MEN, UNDER THE IDEA OF THE WHOLE LIFE OF MAN, PRESENTS THE VISIBLE PHENOMENA OF HIS ANIMAL EXISTENCE, AND FROM THEM DRAWS DEDUCTIONS AS TO THE AIM OF HIS LIFE.

"LIFE is what takes place in a living being from the time of his birth to his death: a man, a dog, a horse, is born; each one has his special body, and this special body of his lives and then dies; the body decomposes, passes into other beings, but will never be the former being again. Life was, and life came to an end; the heart beats, the lungs breathe, the body does not decompose, — which means that the man, the horse, the dog, is alive; the heart has ceased to beat, breathing has come to an end, the body has begun to decompose, — which means that it is dead, and that there is no life. Life is that process which goes on in the body of man, as well as in that of the

animal, in the interval of time between birth and death. What can be clearer?"

Thus have the very rudest people, who have hardly emerged from animal existence, always looked upon life, and thus they look upon it now. And lo! in our day, the teaching of the Scribes, entitling itself science, professes this same coarse, primitive presentation of life, as the only true one. Making use of all those instruments of inward knowledge which mankind has acquired, this false teaching is systematically desirous of leading man back into that gloom of ignorance from which he has been striving to escape for so many thousand years.

"We cannot define life in our consciousness," says this doctrine. "We go astray when we observe it in ourselves. That conception of happiness, the aspiration towards which in our consciousness constitutes our life, is a deceitful illusion, and life cannot be understood in that consciousness. In order to understand life, it is only necessary to observe its manifestations as movements of matter. Only from these observations, and the laws deduced from them, can we discover

the law of life itself, and the law of the life of man.[1]"

The science of physics talks of the laws and relations of forces, without putting to itself any questions as to what force is, and without endeavoring to explain the nature of force. The science of chemistry speaks of the relations of matter, without questioning what matter is, and without seeking to define its nature; the science of biology deals with the forms of life, putting to itself no questions as to what life is, and not seeking to define its nature. And force and matter and life are accepted as real sciences, not as subjects for study, but adopted as axioms from other realms of learning, as bases of operation upon which is constructed the edifice of every separate science. Thus does real science regard the subject, and this science cannot have any injurious influence upon the masses, inclining them to ignorance. But not thus does the false, philosophizing science look upon the subject. "We will study matter, and force, and life; and, if we study them, we can know them," say they, not reflecting that they are

[1] Real science, knowing its proper place and hence its object, modest and hence powerful, never has said and never says this.

not studying matter, force, and life, but merely their relations and their forms.

And behold, false science, having placed under the conception of the whole life of man its visible portion which is known to him through his consciousness, the animal existence, begins to study these apparent phenomena at first in the animal man, then in animals in general, then in plants, then in matter, constantly asserting, in the meanwhile, that they are studying not a few phenomena, but life itself. Their observations are so complicated, so varied, so confused, so much time and strength have been wasted upon them, that men gradually forget the original error of admitting a portion of the subject as the whole subject, and finally become fully convinced that the study of the visible properties of matter, plants, and animals is study of life itself, of that life which is known to man only through his consciousness. What takes place is somewhat similar to that which happens when a person is showing something in the dark, and is desirous of upholding that mistake under which the spectators are laboring.

"Look nowhere," says the exhibitor, "except in the direction where the reflections appear, and, most of all, do not look at the object itself; for there is no object, but only its reflection." This is the very thing which the false science of the Scribes of our day does, conniving with the rude throng, looking upon life without the chief definition of its aspiration towards happiness, which is discovered only in the consciousness of man.[1] Proceeding directly from the definition of life independent of the aspiration towards happiness, false science observes the objects of human beings, and, finding in them aims foreign to man, forces them upon him.

The aim of human beings, as presented by these external observations, is the preservation of one's individuality, the preservation of one's aspect, the production of others similar to one, and the struggle for existence, and this same fancied aim of life is also thrust on man.

False science, having adopted as a base of operation an antiquated presentation of life, in which that contradiction of human life which constitutes

[1] See appendix at the end of the book, on "the false definition of life."

its chief property is not visible, this fictitious science in its most extreme deductions arrives at that point which the coarse majority of mankind requires, at the admission of the possibility of the happiness of individual life alone, at the admission for humanity of the happiness of the animal existence alone.

False science goes much further even than the demands of the coarse herd for whom it wishes to find an explanation require; it arrives at the assertion that it rejects the rational consciousness of man from its first flash, it arrives at the deduction that the life of man, like that of every animal, consists in the struggle for the existence of individuality, race and species.[1]

[1] See second appendix.

CHAPTER V.

THE FALSE DOCTRINES OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES GIVE NEITHER EXPLANATIONS OF THE MEANING OF REAL LIFE, NOR GUIDANCE FOR IT; THE SOLE GUIDE FOR LIFE APPEARS AS THE INERTIA OF LIFE, WHICH HAS NO RATIONAL EXPLANATION.

"It is useless to define life; every one knows it, so let us live," say, in words of error, the men who are upheld by false teachings. And, not knowing what life and its happiness are, it seems to them that they live, as it may seem to a man who is being borne along by the waves, without exercising any control of his course, that he is sailing to the place where he should go, and where he wishes to go.

A child is born in want or in luxury, and he receives the training of the Pharisees or of the Scribes. For the child, for the young man, there exists as yet no contradiction in life nor problems in connection with it, and therefore neither the

explanations of the Pharisees nor the explanations of the Scribes are necessary to him, and they cannot govern his life. He learns simply from the example of the people who live about him, and this is equally the example of the Scribes and Pharisees; and both the former and the latter live only for personal happiness, and this is what they teach him.

If his parents are poor, he learns from them that the aim of life is the acquisition of as much bread and money as possible, and as little work as possible, so that his animal person may be as comfortable as possible.

If he has been born in luxury, he will learn that the aim of life is wealth, and honors, so that he may pass his time in the merriest and most agreeable manner possible.

All the knowledge acquired by the poor man is of use to him only for the purpose of improving the comfortable condition of his own person. All the attainments in science and art acquired by the rich man are of use to him only for the combating of *ennui*, and passing the time pleasantly. The longer both of them live, the more and more strongly do they imbibe the prevailing views of

men of the world. They marry, have families, and their thirst for the acquisition of animal welfare of life is augmented with the justification of their families; the struggle with others grows fiercer, and arranges the inertia of custom of life solely with a view to the welfare of the individual.

And if there occurs to either the rich or the poor man a doubt as to the reasonableness of such a life, if to either there presents itself the question, "What is the reason for this objectless struggle for my existence, which my children will continue? or why this delusive pursuit of enjoyments, which end in suffering for me and for my children?" then there is hardly any likelihood that he will learn those definitions of life which were given long ago to mankind by its great teachers, who found themselves thousands of years before him in the same situation. The teachings of the Scribes and Pharisees so thickly veils them that he rarely succeeds in seeing them. The Pharisees alone, to the question, "To what purpose this miserable life?" make reply: "Life is miserable, and always has been so, and must always be so; the happiness of life consists not in its present, but in the past, before life was, and in the future, after life is ended."

Brahmin, and Buddhist, and Taoist, and Jewish, and Christian Pharisees always say one and the same thing. The present life is evil, and the explanation of this evil lies in the past, in the apparition of the world and of man; but the correction of the existing evil lies in the future, beyond the grave. All that man can do for the acquisition of happiness, not in this but in a future life, is to believe in that teaching which we impart to you, — in the fulfilment of the ceremonial forms which we prescribe. And the doubter, perceiving in the life of all men, who are living for their own happiness, and in the life of the very Pharisees, who live only for the same thing, the falsity of this explanation, and not penetrating the meaning of their reply, simply refuses to believe them, and betakes himself to the Scribes.

"All teachings about any other life whatever than this which we see in the animal is the fruit of ignorance," say the Scribes. "All your doubts as to the reasonableness of your life are empty fancies. The life of worlds, of the earth, of man, of animals, of plants, have their laws, and we will investigate them, we will study the origin of worlds, and of man, of animals and plants, and of

all matter; we will also investigate what awaits the worlds when the sun shall cool, and so forth, and what has been and what will be with man, and with every animal and plant. We can show and prove that all has been so and will be as we say; besides this, our investigations will, in addition, contribute to the amelioration of mankind. But of your life and your aspirations towards happiness, we can tell you nothing more than what you already know without us: you are alive, so live as best you can."

And the doubter, having received no reply to his question from these either, remains as he was before, without any guidance whatever in life, except the impulses of his own personality.

Some of the doubters, according to the reasoning of Pascal, having said to themselves: "What if all the things with which the Pharisees frighten us for non-fulfilment of their prescribed forms should be true?" and so fulfil in their leisure time all the dictates of the Pharisees (there can be no loss, and there is a possibility that the profit may be great), while others, agreeing with the Scribes, flatly reject any other life, and all religious forms, and say to themselves: "Not I alone, but all the

rest, have lived and do live thus, — let what will be be." And this discrepancy confers no superiority on either the one or the other; and both the former and the latter remain without any explanation whatever of the meaning of their present life.

But it is necessary to live.

Human life is a series of actions from the time a man rises until he goes to bed; every day, man must incessantly make his choice out of hundreds of actions which are possible to him, of those which he will perform. Neither the teaching of the Pharisees, who explain the mysteries of the heavenly life, nor the teaching of the Scribes, who investigate the origin of worlds, and of man, and who draw conclusions concerning their future fate, furnishes that guidance to man, in the choice of his actions, without which man cannot live. And so the man submits, perforce, not to reason, but to that external guidance of life which has always existed, and does exist in every community of men.

This guidance has no rational explanation, but it directs the vast majority of the actions of all men. This guidance is the habit of life of com-

munities of men, ruling all the more powerfully over men in proportion as men have less comprehension of their life. This guidance cannot be accurately expressed, because it is composed of facts and actions, the most varied as to place and time. It is lights upon the boards of their ancestors for the Chinese; pilgrimages to famous places for the Mahometan; a certain amount of prayer words for the Indian; it consists of fidelity to his flag, and honor to his uniform, for the warrior; the duel for the man of the world; blood-vengeance for the mountaineer; it means certain sorts of food on specified days, a particular mode of education for one's children; it means visits, a certain decoration of one's dwelling, specified manners of celebrating funerals, births and deaths. It signifies an interminable number of facts and actions, filling the whole of life. It means what is called propriety, custom, and, most frequently of all, duty, and sacred duty.

And it is to this guidance that the majority of mankind submit themselves, in spite of the teaching of the explanations of life furnished by the Scribes and Pharisees. Man beholds everywhere about him, from his very childhood, men accom-

plishing those deeds with full assurance and solemnity, and possessing no rational explanation of their life, and the man not only begins to do the same things, but even attempts to ascribe a rational meaning to these deeds. He wishes to believe that the men who do these things possess an explanation of the reasons for which they do what they do. And he begins to be convinced that these deeds have a rational meaning, if not wholly known to him, yet known to these persons at least.

But the majority of the rest of mankind, not being possessed of a rational explanation of life, find themselves in precisely the same situation as himself. They do these things only because others, who, as it seems to them, have an explanation of these deeds, demand the same from them. And thus, involuntarily deceiving each other, people become ever more and more accustomed not only to do these things without possessing a rational explanation, but they become accustomed to ascribing to these deeds some mysterious sense incomprehensible even to themselves. And the less they understand the meaning of what they do, the more doubtful to themselves these acts become, the more importance do they attach to them, and

with all the greater solemnity do they fulfil them. And the rich man and the poor man do that which others do about them, and they designate these acts as their duty, their sacred duty, reassuring themselves by the thought that what has been done so long by so many people, and is so highly prized by them, cannot but be the real business of life. And men live on to hoar old age, to death, striving to believe that if they themselves do not know why they live, others do know this — the very people who know precisely as little about it as those who depend upon them.

New people come into existence, are born, grow up, and, looking upon this whirlpool of existence called life, — in which old, gray, respected men, surrounded by the reverence of the people, assert that this senseless commotion is life, and that there is no other, — go away after being jostled at its doors. Such a man who has never beheld assemblies of men, on seeing a crowding, lively, noisy throng at the entrance, and having decided that this is the assembly itself, after having been elbowed at the door, goes home with aching ribs and under the full conviction that he has been in the assembly.

We pierce mountains, we fly round the world, electricity, microscopes, telephones, wars, parliaments, philanthropy, the struggle of parties, universities, learned societies, museums, — is this life?

The whole of men's complicated, seething activity, with their trafficking, their wars, their roads of communication, their science and their arts, is for the most part, only the thronging of the unintelligent crowd about the doors of life.

CHAPTER VI.

DIVISION OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE MEN OF OUR WORLD.

"But verily, verily, I say unto you, the time is at hand, and is even now come, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and, hearing, shall be made alive," and this time will come.

However much a man may have assured himself, and however much others may have assured him of this — that life can only be happy and rational beyond the grave, or that only personal life can be happy and rational, — man cannot believe it. Man possesses, in the depths of his soul, an ineffaceable demand that his life shall be happy and have a rational meaning; but a life having before it no other aim than the life beyond the grave, or an impossible bliss of personality, is evil and nonsense.

"Life for the future life?" says the man to himself: but if this life, the only specimen of life with which I am acquainted, — my present life, —

must be irrational, then it not only does not confirm in my mind the possibility of another, a rational life, but, on the contrary, it convinces me that life is, in its very substance, irrational, and that there can be no other life than an irrational one.

Live for myself? But my individual life is evil and senseless. Live for my family? For my society? for my country or even for mankind? But if the life of my person is miserable and senseless, then the life of every other human person is miserable and senseless also; and therefore an endless quantity of senseless and irrational persons, collected together, will not form even one happy and rational life. Live for myself, not knowing why, doing that which others do? But, surely, I am aware that others know no more than I why they do what they do.

The time will come when a rational consciousness will outgrow the false doctrines, and man will come to a halt in the midst of life, and demand explanations.[1]

Only the rare man, who has no connection with people of other modes of life, and only the man who is constantly engaged in an intense struggle

[1] See third appendix at the end of the book.

with nature for the support of his bodily existence, can believe that the fulfilment of those senseless acts which he calls his duty can be the peculiar duty of his life.

The time is coming, and is already come, when that delusion which gives out the renunciation — in words — of this life, for the sake of preparing for one's self one in the future, and the admission of the mere animal existence alone as life, and so-called duty as the business of life, — when that delusion will become clear to the majority of men, and only those forced by necessity, and dulled by a vicious career, will be able to exist without being conscious of the senselessness and poverty of their existence.

More and more frequent will be men's awakening to a rational sense; they will become alive again in their graves, and the fundamental contradiction of human life will, in spite of all men's efforts to hide it from themselves, present itself before the majority of men with terrible power and distinctness.

"All my life consists of a desire for happiness for myself," says the man to himself, on awakening, "but my reason tells me that this happiness

cannot exist for me, and that, whatever I may do, whatever I may attain to, all will end in one and the same thing — in sufferings and death, in annihilation. I desire happiness, I desire life, I desire a rational sense, but in myself and in all who surround me there is evil, death, and incoherence. How am I to exist? How am I to live? What am I to do?" and there is no reply.

The man looks about him, and seeks an answer to his question, and finds it not. He finds around him doctrines which answer questions which he has never put, and which he never will put to himself; but there is no answer in the world surrounding him to the question which he does put to himself. There is one anxiety for men who do, without themselves knowing why, the things which others do, when they themselves know not why.

All live as though unconscious of the wretchedness of their position and the senselessness of their activity. "Either *they* are irrational or *I* am," says the awakened man to himself. "But all cannot be irrational, it must be that the irrational one is myself. But no — the reasoning *I* which says this to me cannot be irrational. Let it stand alone

against all the world, but I cannot do otherwise than trust it."

And the man recognizes himself as alone in all the world, with all the terrible questions which rend his soul.

But it is necessary to live.

One *I*, his individuality, bids him live.

But another *I*, his reason, says, "It is impossible to live."

The man is conscious that he has been parted in twain, and this torturing partition rends his soul.

And the cause of this partition and of his suffering seems to him to be his reason.

Reason, the loftiest of man's faculties, which is indispensable to his life, which gives to him, naked and helpless amid the powers of nature which destroy him, both means of existence and means of enjoyment, — this faculty poisons his existence. In all the world which surrounds him, among living beings, the faculties peculiar to these beings are necessary to them all in common, and constitute their happiness. Plants, insects, animals, submitting to the law of their being, live a blissful, joyous, tranquil life.

But behold, in man, this loftiest faculty of his

nature produces in him such an astounding condition of things that often — with ever increasing frequency of late days — man cuts the Gordian knot of his life, and kills himself simply for the sake of escaping from the torturing inward contradictions produced by intelligent consciousness, which has been carried to the last degree of tension in our day.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PARTITION OF SENSE ARISES FROM THE BLENDING OF THE LIFE OF THE ANIMAL WITH THE LIFE OF MAN.

It seems to man that the partition of sense which has awakened within him shatters his life in fragments and brings it to a stand-still, only because he recognizes as his life that which has not been, is not, and could not be his life.

Having been reared and having grown up in the false doctrines of our world, which have confirmed in him the conviction that his life is nothing else than his individual existence, which began with his birth, it seems to man that he lived when he was a boy, a baby; then it seems to him that he has lived, without a break, when he was a youth and when he had reached full manhood. He has lived a very long time, as it seems to him, and during all that time has never ceased to live, and lo, all at once, he has reached a point where it has

become indubitably clear to him that it is impossible for him to continue to live as he has lived before, and that his life has stopped and been shattered.

False teaching has confirmed him in the idea that his life is the period of time from birth to death; and, looking at the life of animals, he has confounded the idea of apparent life with his consciousness, and has become quite convinced that this life which he can see is his life.

The intelligent consciousness which has awakened within him, having advanced such demands as are not to be satisfied by the animal life, shows him the error of his conception of life; but the false teaching, having eaten into him, prevents his confessing his error; he cannot reject his conception of life as an animal existence, and it seems to him that his life has come to a stand-still through the awakening of intelligent consciousness. But that which he calls his life, his existence since his birth, has never been his life; his idea that he has been living all the time from his birth to the present moment is an illusion of the senses, similar to the illusion of the senses in the visions of sleep; up to the time of his awakening he had no visions,

they have all formed at the moment of his awakening. Before the awakening of his intelligent consciousness, there was no life of any sort ; his conception of his past life was formed at the awakening of his intelligent consciousness.

A man has lived like an animal during the period of his childhood, and has known nothing of life. If the man had lived only ten months, he would never have known anything about his own existence or any one else's ; just as little would he have known of life had he died in his mother's womb. And not only can the boy not know, but the unintelligent grown-up men and the utter idiot cannot know that they live, and that other human beings live. And therefore they have no human life.

Man's life begins only with the appearance of rational consciousness, — of that which reveals to man simultaneously his life in the present and the past, and the life of other individuals, and all that flows inevitably from the relations of these individuals, sufferings and death, — of that same thing which calls forth in him the renunciation of personal happiness in life, and the inconsistency which, as it seems to him, brings his life to a stand-still.

Man wishes to define his life by dates, as he defines an existence outside himself which he sees, and all of a sudden a life awakens in him, which does not correspond with the dates of his birth in the flesh, and he wants to believe that that which is not defined by dates can be life. But, seek as a man may, at the time of that shock, which he can consider as the beginning of his rational life, he will never find it.[1]

[1] Nothing is more common than to hear discussions as to the birth and development of man's life, and of life in general, according to dates. It seems to people who reason thus, that they stand on the very firm ground of reality, but, nevertheless, there is nothing more fantastic than discussions of the development of life by dates. These discussions resemble the actions of a man who should undertake to measure a line, and who should not place a mark at the one point which he knows, on which he stands, but should take imaginary points on an endless line, at various and indefinite distances from himself, and from them should measure the distance to himself. Is not this the very thing that men do when they discuss the origin and development of life in man? In fact, where can we take, on that endless line which represents development — from the past in the life of man, — that arbitrary point, from which it is possible to begin the fantastic history of the development of this life? In the birth or generation of the child or of his parents, or, still further back, in the original animal, and protoplasm, in the first bit that broke away from the sun? Surely, all these discussions will be the most arbitrary fantasies — a measuring without measures.

He will never find, in his reminiscences, that point, that beginning of rational consciousness. He imagines that rational consciousnesss has always existed in him. But if he does find something which bears a resemblance to the beginning of this sense, he does not, by any means, find it in his birth in the flesh, but in a realm which has nothing in common with that birth in the flesh. He recognizes his rational origin not as at all the same as his birth in the flesh seems to him. When questioning himself as to his rational sense, man never imagines that he, as a rational being, was the son of his father and mother and the grandson of his grandfathers and grandmothers, who were born in such and such a year; but he always recognizes himself, not as a son but as joined in one through his consciousness with other reasoning beings, the most remote from him in point of time and place, who have sometimes lived a thousand years before him, and at the other end of the world. In his rational consciousness, man does not even perceive his origin at all, but he recognizes his union with other rational consciousnesses, independent of time and space, so that they enter into him and he enters into them. And this

rational sense, awakened in man, seems to bring to a halt that semblance of life which the error of men regards as life: to people in error it seems that their life stops just when it has first been aroused.

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE IS NO DIVISION AND CONTRADICTION, IT ONLY SO APPEARS THROUGH FALSE DOCTRINE.

Only the false doctrine of human life, as the existence of an animal from birth to death, in which men are reared and upheld, produces that torturing condition of division into which men enter on the discovery in them of their rational consciousness.

To a man who finds himself laboring under this error, it seems as though the life within him were being rent in twain.

Man knows that his life is a unit, but he feels that it consists of two parts. A man, when he has crooked two fingers, and is rolling a little ball between them, knows that there is but one ball, but he feels as though there were two. Something of the same sort occurs with the man who has acquired a false idea of life.

A false direction has been imparted to the mind of man. He has been taught to recognize as life

his one, fleshly, individual existence, which cannot be life.

With the same false conception of life as he imagines it, he has looked upon life and has beheld two lives — the one which he has imagined to himself, and the one which actually exists.

To such a man it seems as though the renunciation by his rational sense of the individual happiness of existence, and the demand for a different bliss, is something sickly and unnatural.

But, for man as a rational being, the renunciation of the possibility of personal happiness and life is the inevitable consequence of the conditions of personal life, and a property of the rational consciousness connected with it. The renunciation of personal happiness and life is, for a rational being, as natural a property of his life as flying on its wings, instead of running on its feet, is for a bird. If the feathered fowl runs on its legs, it does not prove that it is not its nature to fly. If we see around us men with unawakened consciousness, who consider that their life lies in the happiness of themselves as individuals, this does not prove that man is incapable of living a rational life. The awakening of man to the true

life which is peculiar to him takes place in our circles, with such a painful effort, merely because the false teaching of the world strives to convince men that the phantom of life is life itself, and that the appearance of true life is the violation of it.

With the people of our world who enter into true life, something of the same sort happens as would take place with a maiden from whom the nature of woman had been concealed. On feeling the symptoms of pregnancy, such a maiden would take a condition which summons her to the obligations and duties of a mother, for an unhealthy and unnatural condition, and be driven to despair.

The self-same despair is felt by the men of our world, at the first symptoms of awakening to the real life of man.

The man in whom rational sense has awakened, but who, at the same time, understands his life only as a personality, finds himself in that position of torture in which an animal would find itself, which, having acknowledged its life as the movement of matter, should not have recognized its law of individuality, but should have merely seen its life in subjection to laws of matter, which go on without its efforts. Such an animal would experi-

ence a painful inward contradiction and division. By submitting itself to the one law of matter, it would see that its life consists in lying still and breathing, but its individuality would have required something else from it; food for itself, a continuation of its species, and then it would seem to the animal that it suffered division and contradiction. "Life," it would say to itself, "consists in submitting to the laws of gravity, i. e., in not moving, in lying still and in submitting to the chemical processes which go on in the body, and lo, I am doing that, but I must move, and procure myself food, and seek a male or a female." The animal would suffer, and would perceive in this condition a painful inconsistency and division.

The same thing takes place with a man who has been taught to recognize the lower law of his life, the animal individuality, as the law of his life. The highest law of life, the law of his rational sense, demands from him another, and the life surrounding him on all sides, and false doctrines, retain him in a deceptive consciousness.

But, as the animal, in order that it may cease to suffer, must confess as its law not the lower law of matter, but the law of its personality, and, by

fulfilling it, profit by the laws of matter for the satisfaction of its aims as an individual, exactly so is it only requisite for a man to recognize his life not in the lower law of individuality, but in the higher law, which includes the first law, — in the law revealed to him in his rational sense, — and the inconsistency is annihilated, and he, as an individual, will be free to submit himself to his rational consciousness, and it will serve him.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BIRTH OF TRUE LIFE IN MAN.

By observing the dates, by watching the appearance of life in the human being, we see that true life is preserved in man, as it is preserved in the seed of grain; and that a time comes when this life makes its appearance. The appearance of true life consists in the animal personality inclining man to his own happiness, while his rational sense shows him the impossibility of personal happiness, and points him to another bliss. Man looks at this happiness, which is pointed out to him in the distance, is incapable of seeing it, at first does not believe in this bliss, and turns back to personal happiness; but the rational sense, which thus indistinctly indicates his happiness to him, so indubitably and convincingly demonstrates the impossibility of individual happiness that man once more renounces individual happiness and takes another look at this new happiness which has been pointed out to him. No rational happiness is visible, but

personal happiness is so indubitably destroyed that it is impossible to continue individual existence, and in the man there begins to form a new relation of his animal to his rational sense. The man begins to be born into the true life of mankind.

Something of the same sort takes place which takes place in the material world at every birth. The child is born not because it desires to be born, because it is better for it to be born, and because it knows that it is good to be born, but because it is ready, and can no longer continue its previous existence; it must yield itself to a new life, not so much because the new life calls it as because the possibility of the former existence has been annihilated.

Rational sense, imperceptibly springing up in his person, grows to such a point that life in his own personality becomes impossible.

What takes place is precisely what takes place at the birth of everything. The same annihilation of the germ of the previous form of life, and the appearance of a new shoot, the same apparent strife of the preceding form, decomposing the germ, and the increase in size of the shoot — and the same nourishment of the shoot at the expense

of the decomposing germ. The difference for us between the birth of the rational sense from the fleshly birth visible to us consists in this, that, while in the fleshly birth we see, in due time and space, from what and how, when and what is born from the embryo, we know that the seed is the fruit, that from the seed, under certain well known conditions, a plant will proceed, that there will be a flower upon it, and then fruit, of the same sort as the seed (the entire cycle of life is accomplished before our very eyes), — the growth of the rational sense we do not perceive in time, and we do not see its cycle. We do not see all the growth of the rational sense, and its cycle, because we are ourselves accomplishing it ; our life is nothing else than the birth of this being, invisible to us, which is brought forth within us, and hence we can in no wise see it.

We cannot see the birth of this new being, of this new relation of the rational sense to the animal, just as the seed cannot see the growth of its stalk. When the rational sense emerges from its concealed condition, and reveals itself to us, it seems to us that we experience a contradiction. But there is no contradiction whatever, as there is

none in the sprouting seed. In the sprouting seed we perceive only that the life, which formerly resided only within the covering of the seed, has now passed into the shoot. Precisely the same in man, on the awakening of the rational sense, there is no contradiction whatever, there is only the birth of a new being, of a new relationship of the rational sense to the animal.

If a man exists without knowing that other individuals live, without knowing that pleasures do not satisfy him, that he will die, — he does not even know that *he* lives, and that there is no contradiction in him.

But if a man has perceived that other individuals are the same as himself, that sufferings menace him, that his existence is a slow death, he will no longer place his life in that decomposing personality, but he must inevitably place it in that new life which is opening before him. And again there is no contradiction, as there is no contradiction in the seed, which sends forth a shoot and then dies.

CHAPTER X.

REASON IS THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT BY MAN OF THE LAWS ACCORDING TO WHICH HIS LIFE MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED.

The true life of man is revealed in the relation of his rational sense to his animal personality. But what is this rational sense? It only begins when the renunciation of the happiness of the animal personality begins. But the renunciation of the happiness of the animal personality only begins when the rational sense is aroused. The Gospel of John begins by saying that the Word, *Logos* (sense, wisdom, word), is the beginning, and that in it is all and from it comes all; and that therefore reason is that which determines all the rest, and which cannot be determined by anything else.

Reason cannot be determined, and we are not called upon to determine it, because we all of us not only know it, but because reason is the only thing that we do know. Communicating one with

another, we are convinced beforehand, more than of anything else, of the identical duty for all of us of this common reason. We are convinced that reason is the only chain which unites all of us living beings together in one. We know reason most firmly and earliest of all because all that we know in the world we know only because that which we know is consonant with the laws of that reason, which is indubitably known to us. We know reason and it is impossible for us not to know it. It is impossible because reason is that law by which reasoning beings — men — must inevitably live. Reason is for man that law in accordance with which his life is perfected, such a law as is that law for the animal in accordance with which it feeds and reproduces itself, as is that law for the plant in accordance with which grows and blossoms the grass or the tree, — as is that law for the heavenly bodies in accordance with which the earth and the stars move. And the law which we know in ourselves as the law of our life is that law in accordance with which are accomplished all the external phenomena of the world. Only with this difference, that we know this difference, that we know this law in ourselves, as that

which *we* ourselves must fulfil, — and in external phenomena as that which is fulfilled in accordance with that law, for our participation. All that we know about the world is only what we see accomplished outside of us, in the heavenly bodies, in animals, in plants, in all the world, subject to reason.

In the outer world we see this subjection to the law of reason ; but in ourselves we know this law, as that which we are bound to fulfil.

The common error in regard to life consists in this, that the subjection of our animal body to the law, not accomplished by us, but only seen by us, is taken for life, while this law of our animal body, with which our rational consciousness is bound up, is accomplished in our animal bodies as unconsciously to ourselves as it is accomplished in a tree, a crystal, a heavenly body.

But the law of our life — the subservience of our animal body to our reason — is the law which we nowhere see, because it has not yet been accomplished, but will be accomplished by us in our life. In the fulfilment of this law, for the attainment of happiness, consists our life. By not understanding that the happiness of our life con-

sists in the subjection of our animal personality to the law of reason, and taking happiness and the existence of our animal personality for our whole life, and rejecting the work of life which has been appointed for us, we deprive ourselves of our true happiness and our real life ; in place of it we set up that existence which we can see, of our animal activity, which operates independently of us, and which cannot, therefore, be our life.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FALSE DIRECTION OF LEARNING.

The error of supposing that the law accomplished in our animal persons, and visible to us, is the law of our life, is an ancient one, into which men have always fallen, and into which they still fall. This error, concealing from men the chief subject of their knowledge, sets in its place a study of the existence of men, independent of the happiness of life.

This false knowledge directs its efforts to the study of happiness alone, and, not having in view the chief object of knowledge, directs its efforts to the study of the animal existence of past and contemporary people, and to the study of the conditions of existence of man in general, as an animal. It seems to it that from this study there may be derived also a guide for the happiness of human life.

False knowledge reasons thus: "Men exist and have existed before us. Let us see how they have

existed, what changes have come about in their existence through time and situation, in what direction these changes point. From these historical alterations in their existence we shall discover the law of their life."

Not having in view the principal aim of learning, the study of that rational law to which the personality of man must submit itself for his happiness, the so-called learned men of this category, by the very aim which they set themselves for their study, pronounce the condemnation on the futility of their study.

In point of fact, if the existence of men alters only in consequence of the general laws of their animal existence, then the study of those laws, to which it is thus subjected, is utterly useless and vain. Whether men know or do not know about the law of change in their existence, this law is accomplished, exactly as the change is accomplished in the life of moles and beavers, in consequence of those conditions in which they find themselves.

But if it is possible for man to know that law of reason to which his life must be subservient, then it is evident that he can nowhere procure the

knowledge of that law of reason, except where it is revealed to him: in his rational consciousness. And therefore, however much men may have studied the subject of how men have *existed* like animals, they will never learn concerning the existence of man anything which would not have taken place of itself in men, without the acquirement of that knowledge.

This is one category of the vain reasonings of men upon life, called historical and political science.

Another category of reasonings, widely disseminated in our day, in which the only object of knowledge is utterly lost sight of, is as follows: —

"Looking upon man, as an object of observation," say the wise men, "we see that he is nourished, grows, reproduces his species, becomes old and dies, exactly like any other animal; but some phenomena (psychical, as they are designated) prevent accuracy of observation, present too great complications, and hence, in order the better to understand man, we will first examine his life in simpler phenomena, similar to those which we see in animals and plants, which lack this psychical activity.

"With this aim, we will investigate the life of animals and plants in general. But, on investigating animals and plants, we see that in all of them there reveal themselves still more simple laws of matter, which are common to them all. And, as the laws of the animal are simpler than the laws of the life of man, and the laws of the plant simpler still, investigation must be based upon the simplest, upon the laws of matter. We see that what takes place in the plant and the animal is precisely what takes place in the man," say they, "and hence we conclude that everything which takes place in man we can explain to ourselves from what takes place in the very simplest dead matter, which is visible to us, and open to our investigations, the more so as all the peculiarities of the activity of man are found in constant dependence upon powers which act in matter. Every change of the matter constituting the body of man alters and infringes upon his whole activity." And hence, they conclude, the laws of matter are the cause of man's activity. But the idea that there is in man something which we do not see in animals or in plants, or in dead matter, and that this something is the only subject of

knowledge, without which every other is useless, does not disturb them.

It does not enter their heads that, if the change of matter in the body of man infringes upon his activity, — this merely proves that the change of matter is one of the causes which affects the activity of man, but not that the movement of matter is one of the causes of man's activity being interfered with, nor in the least that the movement of matter is the cause of his activity. Exactly as the injury done by the removal of earth from under the root of a plant proves that the earth may or may not be everywhere, but not that the plant is merely the product of the earth. And they study in man that which takes place also in dead matter, and in the plant, and in animals, assuming that an explanation of the laws, and the phenomena accompanying the life of man, can elucidate for them the life of man itself.

In order to understand the life of man, that is to say, that law to which, for the happiness of man, his animal person must be subservient, men examine either historical existence, but not the life of man, or the subservience, not acknowledged by man but only seen by him, of the animal and the

plant, and of matter, to various laws; i. e., they do the same thing that men would do if they studied the situation of objects unknown to them, for the sake of finding that unknown aim which must be followed.

It is perfectly true that the knowledge of the phenomenon visible to us, of the existence of man in history, may be instructive for us; and that the study of the laws of the animal person of man and of other animals may be equally instructive for us, as well as the study of those laws to which matter is subject. The study of all this is important for man, since it shows him, as in a mirror, that which is infallibly accomplished in his life, but it is evident that this knowledge of that which is already in process of accomplishment and visible to us, however full it may be, cannot furnish us with the chief knowledge, which is necessary to us, the knowledge of that law to which, for our happiness, our animal personality must be subservient. The knowledge of the laws that are accomplished is instructive for us, but only when we acknowledge that law of reason to which our animal personality must be subservient, but not when that law is not recognized at all.

However well the tree may have studied (if it could but study) all those chemical and physical phenomena which take place in it, it can by no means, from these observations and from this knowledge, deduce for itself the necessity of collecting sap and of distributing it for the growth of the bole, the leaf, the flower, and the fruit.

Precisely thus — man, however well he may know the law which guides his animal personality, and the laws which control matter, — these laws will afford him not the slightest guidance as to how he is to proceed with the bit of bread which is in his hands: whether he is to give it to his wife, to a stranger, to a dog, or to eat it himself, to defend this bit of bread or to give it to the person who shall ask him for it. But a man's life consists solely of the decision of these and similar questions.

The study of laws which guide the existence of animals, plants, and matter is not only useful but indispensable for the elucidation of the law of the life of man, but only when that study has as its chief aim the subject of man's knowledge: the elucidation of the law of reason.

But on the assumption that the life of man is

merely his animal existence, and that the happiness indicated by rational consciousness is impossible, and that the law of reason is but a vision, — such study becomes not only vain but deadly, since it conceals from man the sole object of knowledge, and maintains him in the error that, by following up the reflection of the object, he can know the subject also. Such study is similar to that which a man should make by attentively studying all the changes and movements of the shadow of the living being, assuming that the cause of the movement of the living being is included in the changes and movements of its shadow.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CAUSE OF FALSE KNOWLEDGE IS THE FALSE PERSPECTIVE IN WHICH OBJECTS PRESENT THEMSELVES.

"TRUE knowledge consists in knowing that we know that which we know, and that we do not know that which we do not know," said Confucius.

But false knowledge consists in thinking that we know that which we do not know; and it is impossible to give a more accurate definition of that false lack of knowledge which reigns among us. It is assumed by the false knowledge of our day that we know that which we cannot know, and that we do not know that which alone we can know. It seems to a man possessed of false knowledge that he knows everything which presents itself to him in space and time, and that he does not know that which is known to him through his rational consciousness.

To such a man it seems that happiness in general, and his happiness in particular, is the most

unfathomable of subjects for him. His reason and his rational consciousness seem to him as nearly the same unfathomable objects; a little more comprehensible subject appears to be himself as an animal; still more comprehensible appear to him animals and plants, and more comprehensible still seems dead, endlessly diffused matter.

Something of the same sort takes place with man's vision. A man always unconsciously directs his sight chiefly on the objects which are more distant, and which therefore seem to him simple in color and outline, on the sky; the horizon, the far-off meadows, the forest. These objects present themselves to him as better defined and more simple in proportion as they are more distant, and, vice versa, the nearer the object, the more complicated is it in outline and color.

If man did not know how to compute the distance of objects, he would not, as he looked, arrange objects in perspective, but would acknowledge the great simplicity and definiteness of outline and color, their greater degree of visibility; and to such a man the interminable sky would appear the simplest and most visible, and then as less visible

objects would the more complicated outlines of the horizon appear to him, and still less visible would appear to him his own hands, moving before his face, and light would appear to him the most invisible of all.

Is it not the same with the false knowledge of man? What is indubitably known to him — his rational consciousness — seems to him to be beyond comprehension, while that which is, indubitably, unattainable for him — boundless and eternal matter — seems to him to be within the scope of knowledge, because on account of its distance from him it seems simple to him.

But, surely, this is precisely the reverse. First of all, and most indubitably of all, every man can know and does know the happiness towards which he is striving; then, as indubitably, he knows the reason, which points out to him that happiness, — he already knows that his animal part is subject to that reason, and he already sees, though he does not know, all the other phenomena which present themselves to him in space and time.

Only to the man with a false idea of life does it seem that he knows objects better in proportion as

they are more clearly defined by time and space: in point of fact, we know fully only that which is not defined by time or space: happiness and the law of reason. But we know external objects the less in proportion as our consciousness has less share in the knowledge, in consequence of which an object is defined only by its place in time and space. And hence, the more exclusively an object is defined by time and space, the less comprehensible is it to man.

The true knowledge of man ends with the knowledge of his individuality — of the animal part. He actually knows himself in this animal, and knows himself not because he is something appertaining to time and space (on the contrary, he never can know himself as a phenomenon appertaining to time and space), but because he is something which must, for its own happiness, be subservient to the law of reason. He knows himself in this animal as something independent of time and space.

When he questions himself as to his place in time and space, it seems to him, first of all, that he stands in the middle of time, which is endless on both sides of him, and that he is the centre of

the sphere, whose surface is everywhere and nowhere. And this self of his, exempt from time and space, man actually knows, and with this, his "*ego*" ends his actual knowledge. All that is contained outside of this, his "*ego*," man does not know, and he can only observe and define it in an external and conventional manner.

Having departed, for a time, from the knowledge of himself, as a rational centre, striving towards happiness, i. e., as a being independent of time and space, man can, for a time, conditionally admit that he is part of the visible world, appearing in time and space. Regarding himself thus, in time and space, in connection with other beings, man combines his true inward knowledge of himself with the external observations on himself, and receives of himself a conception of a man in general similar to all other men; through this conventional knowledge of himself, man conceives of other men, also, a certain external idea, but he does not know them.

The impossibility, for man, of true knowledge of men, proceeds also from the fact that of such men he sees not one but hundreds, thousands, and he knows that there have existed and that there will

exist men whom he has never seen and whom he never will see.

Beyond men, still further removed from himself, man beholds in time and space animals, differing from men and from each other. These creatures would be utterly incomprehensible to him, if he were not possessed of a knowledge of man in general; but, having this knowledge, and deducing from his conception of man his rational consciousness, he receives some idea concerning animals also; but this idea is for him less like knowledge than his idea of men in general. He beholds a vast quantity of the most varied animals, and the greater their numbers, the less possible, apparently, is any knowledge of them for him.

Further removed from himself, he beholds plants, and the diffusion of these phenomena in the world is even greater, and knowledge of them is still more impossible for him.

Still further from him, behind animals and plants, in space and time, man beholds bodies without life, and forms of matter which are but little or not at all distinguishable. Matter he understands least of all. The knowledge of the

forms of matter is already quite indistinguishable to him, and he not only does not know it, but he only imagines it to himself, the more so as matter already presents itself to him, in space and time, as endless.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RECOGNIZABILITY OF OBJECTS IS AUGMENTED NOT ACCORDING TO THEIR MANIFESTATION IN SPACE AND TIME, BUT ACCORDING TO THE UNITY OF THE LAW WHERETO WE AND THOSE SUBJECTS WHICH WE STUDY ARE SUBSERVIENT.

What can be more clear than the words: the dog is sick; the calf is affectionate; he loves me; the bird rejoices; the horse is afraid, a good man, a vicious animal? And all these most important and comprehensible words are not defined by space and time; on the contrary, the more incomprehensible to us the law to which a phenomenon is subservient, the more accurately is the phenomenon defined by time and space. Who will say that he understands that law of gravity in accordance with which the movements of the earth, moon, and sun take place? Yet an eclipse of the sun is determined in the most accurate manner by space and time.

We know fully only our life, our aspiration for

happiness and the reason which points us to that happiness. The knowledge which stands next to it in point of sureness is the knowledge of our animal personality, striving towards happiness and subservient to the law of reason. In the knowledge of our animal personality there already appear conditions of time and space, visible, palpable, observable but not accessible to our understanding. After this, in point of sureness of knowledge, is the knowledge of animal personalities, similar to ourselves, in which we recognize an aspiration towards happiness, as well as a rational consciousness, in common with ourselves. In so far as the life of these personalities approaches the laws of our life, of aspiration towards happiness, and submission to the law of reason, to that extent do we know them; in so far as it reveals itself under conditions of time and space, to that extent we do not know them. Thus, more than in any other way, do we know man.

The next thing in point of surety of knowledge is our knowledge of animals, in which we see a personality striving towards welfare, like our own, — though now we hardly recognize a semblance of our rational consciousness, — and with

which we cannot communicate through that rational consciousness.

After animals, we behold plants, in which we with difficulty recognize a personality similar to our own, aspiring to happiness. These beings present themselves to us chiefly in phenomena of time and space, and are hence still less accessible to our knowledge.

We know them only because in them we behold a personality, similar to our animal personality, which, equally with ours, aspires to happiness, and matter which subjects itself to the law of reason under the conditions of time and space.

Still less accessible to our knowledge are impersonal, material objects; in them we no longer find semblances of our personality, we perceive no striving at all after happiness, but we behold merely the phenomena of time and space of the laws of reason, to which they are subject.

The genuineness of our knowledge does not depend upon the accessibility to observation of objects in time and space, but contrariwise; the more accessible to observation the phenomena of the object in time and place, the less comprehensible is it to us.

Our knowledge of the world flows from the consciousness of our striving after happiness, and of the necessity, for the attainment of this happiness, of the subjection of our animal part to reason. If we know the life of the animal, it is only because we behold in the animal a striving towards happiness, and the necessity of subjection to the law of reason, which is represented in it by the law of organism.

If we know matter, we know it only because, in spite of the fact that its happiness is incomprehensible to us, we nevertheless behold in it the same phenomenon as in ourselves — the necessity of subjection to the law of reason, which rules it.

We cannot know ourselves from the laws which rule animals, but we can know animals only by that law which we know in ourselves, and so much the less can we know ourselves from the laws of our life transferred to the phenomena of matter.

All that man knows of the external world he knows only because he knows himself and in himself finds three different relations to the world: one relation of his rational conscious-

ness, another relation of his animal, and a third relation of the matter entering into his animal body. He knows in himself these three different relations, and therefore all that he sees in the world is always disposed before him in a perspective of three planes, separate from each other: (1) rational beings; (2) animals, and (3) lifeless matter.

And, from knowledge of the laws of matter, as they think of it, we can learn the law of organisms, and not from the laws of organism can we know ourselves as a rational creation, but vice versa. First of all we may and we must know ourselves, i. e., that law of reason to which, for our own happiness, our personality must be subject, and only then can we and must we know also the law of our animal personality, and of other personalities like it, and, at a still greater distance from us, the laws of matter.

The laws of matter seem peculiarly clear to us, only because they are uniform for us: and they are uniform for us because they are especially far removed from the law of our life as we recognize it.

The laws of organisms seem to us simpler than

the law of our life, also on account of their distance from us. But in them we merely observe laws, but we do not know them, as we know the law of our rational consciousness, which we must fulfil.

We know neither the one being nor the other, but we merely see, we observe outside of ourselves. Only the law of our rational consciousness do we know indubitably, because it is necessary to our happiness, because we live by this consciousness; we do not see it because we do not possess that highest point from which we might be able to observe it.

Only, if there were higher beings subjecting our rational consciousness as our rational consciousness subjects itself to our animal personality, and as our animal personality (our organism) subjects matter to itself — these higher beings might behold our rational life as we behold our animal existence and the existence of matter.

Human life presents itself as indissolubly bound up with two modes of existence, which it includes within itself: the existence of animals and plants (of organisms), and the existence of matter.

Man himself makes his real life, and lives it; but in the two modes of existence bound up with his life, man cannot take part. Body and matter, constituting him, exist of themselves.

These forms of existence present themselves to man as though preceding the lives lived through, included in his life, as though reminiscences of former lives.

In the real life of man, these two forms of existence furnish him with implements and materials for his work, but not the work itself.

It is useful for a man to learn thoroughly both the materials and the implements of his work. The better he knows them, the better condition will he be in to work. The study of these forms of existence included within him, of his animal and the material constituting the animal, shows man, as though in a mirror, the universal law of all existence — submission to the law of reason, and is thereby confirmed in the necessity of subjecting his animal to its law; but man cannot and must not confound the material and implements of his work with the work itself.

However much a man may have studied the visible, palpable life, observed by him in himself

and in others, which is fulfilled without any effort of his, this life will always remain a mystery to him; he will never understand a life of which he is unconscious, and by observations upon this mysterious life, which is always hiding from him, in the infinity of space and time, he will be in no wise enlightened as to his real life, which is revealed to him in his consciousness and which consists in the subservience of his animal personality, to the law of reason known to himself, and for the attainment of his entirely independent happiness.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TRUE LIFE OF MAN IS NOT THAT WHICH TAKES PLACE IN SPACE AND TIME.

Man knows life in himself as an aspiration towards happiness, to be attained by the submission of his animal personality to the law of reason.

He does not and cannot know any other life of man. For the man recognizes the animal as living, only when the matter constituting it is subject not only to its laws, but to the higher law of organism.

There is in a certain conjunction of matter, submission to the higher law of organism; we recognize life in this conjunction of matter; no, this submission has not begun, or ended; and that does not yet exist, which distinguishes this matter from all other matter, in which act only mechanical, physical, and chemical laws, — and we do not recognize in it the life of the animal.

In precisely the same manner, we recognize people like ourselves, or even ourselves, as living only when our animal personality, in addition to submission to the law of organism, is subservient to the higher law of our consciousness.

As soon as there is none of this submission of the personality to the law of reason, as soon as the law of personality alone acts in man, subjecting to itself the matter which constitutes it, we do not know and we do not see human life either in others or in ourselves, as we do not see the life of the animal in matter, which is subject only to its laws.

However powerful and rapid may be a man's movements in delirium, in madness, in agony, in intoxication, in a burst of passion even, we do not recognize a man as alive, we do not bear ourselves to him as to a living man, and we recognize in him only the possibility of life. But, however weak and motionless a man may be, if we see that his animal personality is subservient to his reason, we recognize him as living, and bear ourselves towards him as such.

We cannot understand man's life otherwise

than as the subjection of the animal personality to the law of reason.

This life reveals itself under conditions of space and time, but is not defined by the conditions of space and time, but only according to the degree of subjection of the animal personality to the reason. Defining life by conditions of space and time is precisely the same as defining the height of an object by its length and breadth.

The movement upward of an object, which is also moving on a plane surface, will furnish an accurate simile of the relationship of the true life of man to the life of the animal personality, or of the true life to the life of time and space. The movement of the object upwards does not depend upon its movement on a plane surface, and can be neither augmented nor diminished thereby. It is the same with the definition of the life of man. True life always reveals itself in personality, and does not depend upon and cannot be either augmented or diminished by this, that, or the other existence of personality.

The conditions of time and space, in which the animal personality of man finds itself, cannot wield influence over the true life, which consists

of the submission of the animal personality to the rational consciousness.

It is beyond the power of man, who desires life, to annihilate or arrest the movement of his existence in time and space, but his true life is the attainment of happiness by submission to reason, independently of those visible movements of time and space. It is only in this increasing attainment of happiness, through submission to reason, that what constitutes the life of man consists. There is none of this augmentation in submission, and man's life proceeds in the two visible directions of time and space, and is one existence. There is this upward movement, this greater and greater submission to reason, — and between two powers one relationship is established ; and more or less movement takes place in accordance with the resultant rising existence of man in the realm of life.

The powers of time and space are definite, final, incompatible with the conception of life, but the power of aspiration towards good through submission to reason is a power rising on high, the very power of life, for which there are no bounds of time or space.

Man imagines that his life comes to a stand-still and is divided, but these hindrances and hesitations are only an illusion of the consciousness (similar to the illusions of the external senses). Obstacles and hesitations there are not and there cannot be in real life: they only seem such to us because of our false view of life. Man begins to live with real life, i. e., he rises to a certain height above the animal life, and from this height he sees the shadowy nature of his animal existence, which infallibly ends in death; he sees that his existence on a plane surface is encompassed on all sides by precipices, and, recognizing the fact that this ascent on high is life itself, he is terrified by that which he has beheld.

Instead of recognizing the power which has raised him to the heights of his life, and going in the direction revealed to him, he takes fright at what has been laid open before him from the heights, deliberately descends, and lies as low as possible, in order not to see the abysses yawning around him. But the force of rational consciousness raises him once more, again he sees, again he takes fright, and again he falls to earth, in order to avoid seeing. And this goes on until he finally

recognizes the fact that, in order to save himself from terror before the movement of a pernicious life, he must understand that his movement on a plane surface — his existence in time and space — is not his life, but that his life consists only in the movement upward, that in the submission of his animal personality to the law of reason is the only possibility of life and happiness. He must understand that he has wings which raise him above the abyss ; that, were it not for those wings, he never would have mounted on high, and would not have beheld the abyss. He must believe in his wings, and soar whither they bear him.

It is only from this lack of faith that proceed those phenomena which seem strange to him at first, of the fluctuation of true life, of its arrest, and the division of consciousness.

Only to the man who understands his life in its animal existence, defined by time and space, does it appear that the rational consciousness has revealed itself at times in the animal creature. And, looking thus upon the revelation in himself of rational consciousness, man asks himself when and under what conditions his rational consciousness revealed itself in him ? But, scrutinize his past as

carefully as he will, man will never discover those times of revelation of the rational consciousness: it will always seem to him either that it has never existed, or that it has always existed. If it appears to him that there have been gaps in rational consciousness, it is only because he does not recognize the life of rational consciousness as life. Comprehending his life only as an animal existence, determined by conditions of time and space, man tries to measure the awakening and activity of rational consciousness by the same measure: he asks himself, "When, for how long a time, under what conditions, did I find myself under the sway of rational consciousness?"

But the intervals between rational life exist only for the man who understands his life as the life of an animal personality. But for the man who understands his life as consisting in the activity of the rational consciousness — there can exist none of these intervals.

Rational life exists. It alone does exist. Intervals of time of one minute or of fifty thousand years are indistinguishable by it, because for it time does not exist.

The true life of man from which he forms for

himself an idea of every other life, is the aspiration towards happiness, attainable by the subjection of his personality to the law of reason. Neither reason nor the degree of his submission to it are determined by either time or space.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RENUNCIATION OF HAPPINESS ON THE PART OF THE ANIMAL PERSONALITY IS THE LAW OF MAN'S LIFE.

Life is a striving towards good.[1] A striving towards good is life. Thus all men have understood, do understand, and always will understand life. And hence the life of man is an aspiration towards the good, or happiness of man, and an aspiration towards the good of man is human life. The common herd, unthinking men, understand the welfare of man to lie in the welfare of his animal part.

False science excludes the conception of happiness from the definition of life, understands life in its animal existence, and hence it sees the happiness of life only in animal welfare, and agrees with the error of the masses.

In both cases, the error arises from confounding the individualities, as science calls them, with

[1] *Blago*, good, happiness, welfare.

rational consciousness. Rational consciousness includes individuality in itself. But individuality does not always include in itself rational consciousness. Individuality is a property of the animal, and of man as well as of the animal. Rational consciousness is the property of man alone.

The animal may live for his own body only; nothing prevents his living thus, he satisfies his individual and unconsciously plays his part, and does not know that he is an individual, but reasoning man cannot live for his own body alone. He cannot live thus because he knows that he is an individual, and therefore knows that other people are individuals also, as well as himself, and he knows all that must result from the relations of these individuals.

If man aspired only to the good of his individuality, if he loved only himself, — his own individuality, — he would not know that other beings love themselves also, any more than animals know this; but if man knows that he is a personality, striving towards the same thing as all the persons surrounding him, he can no longer strive for what is evidently evil for his rational consciousness, and

his life can no longer consist in striving for his individual welfare.

It merely seems to man, at times, that his aspiration towards good has, for its object, the satisfaction of the demands of the animal personality. This delusion arises from the fact that man takes that which he sees proceeding in his animal part, for the activity of his rational consciousness. What results is something in the nature of what would take place if a man were to govern himself, in a waking state, by what he had seen in dreams. And if this delusion is upheld by false teachings, there results in man a confounding of his personality with his rational consciousness.

But his rational consciousness always shows man that the satisfaction of the demands of his animal personality cannot constitute his happiness, and hence his life, and therefore it draws him irresistibly towards that happiness, hence towards the life which is peculiar to him, and it does not become confused with his animal personality.

It is generally thought and said that renunciation of the welfare of personality is a deed worthy of man. Renunciation of the welfare of personality is not a merit, is not an exploit, but an indis-

pensable condition of the life of man. At the same time that man recognizes himself as an individual, separated from all the world, he also recognizes other individuals separated from all the world, and their mutual connection, and the transparency of the welfare of his personality, and the sole actuality of happiness to be only of such a sort as may be satisfied by his rational consciousness.

In the case of an animal, activity which does not have for its object its individual welfare, but is directly opposed to that welfare, is renunciation of life; but in the case of man, it is precisely the reverse. The activity of man, directed solely to the attainment of individual happiness, is a complete renunciation of the life of man.

For the animal, who has no rational consciousness to demonstrate to him the poverty and limited character of his existence, personal happiness, and the reproduction of its species therefrom resulting, constitute the highest aim of life. But for man, personality is merely that step in existence with which the true happiness of his life, which is not synonymous with the happiness of his personality, is revealed to him.

The consciousness of individuality is not life for man, but that boundary from which his life, consisting in ever greater and greater attainment to the happiness which is proper to him, and which does not depend upon the happiness of his animal part, begins.

According to the prevalent conception of life, human life is the fragment of time from the birth to the death of his animal part. But this is not human life; this is merely the existence of man as an animal personality. But human life is something which only reveals itself in the animal existence, just as organic life is something which only reveals itself in the existence of matter.

First of all, the apparent objects of man's personality present themselves to him as the objects of his life. These objects are visible, and hence they seem to be comprehensible.

But the aims pointed out to him by his rational consciousness seem incomprehensible, because they are invisible to him. And man, at first, passionately repulses the visible and yields himself to the invisible.

To a man perverted by the false teachings of

the world, the demands of the animal which fulfil themselves, and which are visible both in himself and in others, seem simple and clear, but the new, invisible requirements of rational consciousness present themselves as conflicting; the satisfaction of them, which is not accomplished by themselves, but which a man must himself attend to, seem, in some way, complicated and indistinct. It is painful and alarming to renounce the visible representation of life and yield one's self to its invisible consciousness, as it would be painful and alarming to a child to be born, were he able to feel his birth, but there is nothing to be done when it is evident that the visible representation leads to death, while the invisible consciousness alone gives life.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ANIMAL PERSONALITY IS THE INSTRUMENT OF LIFE.

Surely, no arguments can conceal from man this patent and indubitable truth, that his personal existence is something which is constantly perishing, hasting on to death, and that there can be, therefore, no life in his animal person.

Man cannot avoid seeing that the existence of his personality from birth and childhood to old age and death is nothing else than a constant waste and diminution of this animal personality, ending in inevitable death; and hence, the consciousness of one's life in personality, including in itself a desire for enlargement and indestructibility of personality, cannot be otherwise than uninterrupted contradiction and suffering, cannot be otherwise than evil, while the only sense of his life lies in its aspiration towards good.

In whatever the genuine happiness of man con-

sists, renunciation of the happiness of his animal person is inevitable for him.

Renunciation of animal happiness is the law of man's life; if it is not accomplished freely, expressing itself in submission to rational consciousness, then it is accomplished violently in every man at the fleshly death of his animal, when, in consequence of the burden of suffering, he desires but one thing: to escape from the torturing consciousness of a perishing personality, and to pass into another form of existence.

Entrance into life, and the life of man, is similar to that which takes place with the horse, whom his master leads forth from the stable and harnesses. It seems to the horse, on emerging from the stable and beholding the light, and scenting liberty, that in that liberty is life, but he is harnessed and driven off. He feels a weight behind him, and if he thinks that his life consists in running at liberty, he begins to kick, falls down, and sometimes kills himself. But if he does not kick, he has but two alternatives left to him: either he will go his way and drag his load, and discover that the burden is not heavy, and trotting not a torment, but a joy; or else he will kick himself

free, and then his master will lead him to the tread-mill, and will fasten him by his halter, the wheel will begin to turn beneath him, and he will walk in the dark, in one place, suffering, but his strength will not be wasted; he will perform his unwilling labor, and the law will be fulfilled in him. The only difference will lie in this, that the first work will be joyful, but the second compulsory and painful.

"But to what purpose this personality, whose happiness I am bound to renounce, in order to receive life?" say men, who accept their animal existence as life, "but for what purpose is this consciousness of individuality, which is opposed to the revelation of his true life, given to man?" This question may be answered by a similar question which might be put by the animal, striving towards his aims, the preservation of his life and species.

"Why," it might ask, "this matter and its laws, mechanical, physical, chemical, and others, with which I must contend in order to attain my ends? If my calling," the animal would say, "be the accomplishment of animal life, then why all these obstacles, which must be overcome?"

It is clear to us that all matter and its laws, with which the animal contends, and which it subjugates to itself for the accomplishment of its animal existence, are not obstacles but means for the attainment of its ends. Only by working over matter, and by means of its laws, does the animal live. It is precisely the same in the life of man. His animal personality, in which man finds himself, and which he is called upon to subject to his rational consciousness, is no obstacle, but a means whereby he attains the aim of his happiness; his animal personality is, for man, that instrument with which he works. Animal existence is, for man, the spade given to a rational being in order that he may dig with it, and, as he digs, dull and sharpen it, and wear it out, but not to be polished up and laid away This talent is given to him to increase, and not to hoard. "And whoso saveth his life shall lose it. And he that loseth his life, for my sake, shall find it."

In these words it is declared that we must not save but lose, and lose unceasingly; and that only by renouncing what is destined to perish, our animal personality, shall we acquire our true life, which will not and cannot perish. It is declared

that our true life will begin only when we cease to count as life that which was not and could not be our life — our animal existence. It is declared that he who will save the spade which he has for the preparation of his food, to sustain his life, — that he, having saved his spade, shall lose his food and his life.

CHAPTER XVII.

BIRTH IN THE SPIRIT.

"Ye must be born anew," said Christ. It is not that any one has commanded man to be born, but that man is inevitably led to it. In order to see life, he must be born again, into that existence through rational consciousness.

Rational consciousness is bestowed upon man, in order that he may fix life in that happiness which is revealed to him by his rational consciousness. He who has fixed his life in that happiness has life; but he who does not place his life therein, but in his animal personality, thereby deprives himself of life. In this consists the definition of life given by Christ.

Men who accept as life their aspiration towards happiness hear these words, and not only do not admit them, but do not understand and cannot understand them. These words seem to them to mean nothing, or very little, as designating some

sentimental and mystical mood, which has been let loose upon them. They cannot understand the significance of these words, which furnish the explanation of a condition which is inaccessible to them, just as a dry seed which has not sprouted could not understand the condition of a moist and already growing seed. For the dry seeds, that sun which shines in these words upon the seed which is being born into life is only an insignificant accident, — something large and warm and light; but for the sprouting seed it is the cause of birth and life. Just the same, for those people who have not yet reached the inward inconsistency of animal personality and rational consciousness, the light of the sun of reason is but an insignificant accident, but sentimental, mystical words. The sun leads to life only those in whom life has already been engendered.

No one has ever learned how it is engendered; why, when, and where, not only in men but in animals and plants. Of its origin in man, Christ has said that no one knows or can know it. And, in fact, what can a man know about the manner in which life is engendered within him? Life is the light of men, the beginning of all things; how

can man know when it is engendered? That does not live, which is engendered and perishes for man, and is revealed in space and time. But true life *is*, and therefore it cannot either begin or perish.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DEMANDS OF RATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

Yes, rational consciousness indubitably, incontrovertibly says to man that, with the constitution of the world which he sees from his personality, he, his personality, can have no happiness. His life is a desire for happiness for himself, for himself in particular, and he sees that this happiness is impossible. But, strange to say, in spite of the fact that he undoubtedly perceives that this happiness is impossible for him, he still lives in the one desire for this impossible happiness — happiness for himself alone.

A man with an awakened (only awakened) rational consciousness, which has not yet, however, subjected to itself his animal personality, if he does not kill himself, lives only for the purpose of realizing that impossible happiness; the man lives and acts only in order that happiness may be his alone, in order that all people, and even all

animals, should live and work to the end that his welfare alone may be provided for, that he may enjoy himself, that for him there may be no suffering and no death.

One surprising point: in spite of the fact that his experience and observation of life, the life of all about him, and his reason, indubitably point out to each man the inaccessibility of this, show him that it is impossible to make other living beings cease to love themselves, and love him alone, — in spite of this, the life of each man consists only in this, — by means of wealth, power, honor, glory, flattery, deceit, in some manner or other, to compel other beings to live not for themselves, but for him alone; to force all beings to love not themselves, but him alone.

Men have done and do everything that they can for this object, and at the same time they see that they are attempting the impossible. "My life is a striving after happiness," says man to himself. "Happiness is possible for me only when all shall love me more than themselves, and all creatures love only themselves — hence all that I do to make them love me is useless. It is useless and I can do nothing more."

Centuries pass: men learn the distance from the planets, determine their weight, learn the structure of the sun and stars, but the question as to how to reconcile the demands of personal happiness with the life of the world, which excludes the possibility of that happiness, remains for the majority of men as insoluble a problem as it was for men five thousand years ago.

Rational consciousness says to every man: "Yes, thou must have happiness, but only on condition that all will love thee more than themselves." And the same rational consciousness demonstrates to men that this cannot be, because they all love themselves alone. And therefore the only happiness which is opened to men by rational consciousness is closed to him again by it.

Centuries pass, and the puzzle as to the happiness of man's life still remains for the majority of men insoluble. But, the problem has been solved long ago. And it always seems astonishing to all who have learned the solution of the riddle, that they have not themselves solved it, — it seems as though they had known it long ago and had merely forgotten it; so simply and voluntarily does the solution of that riddle, which seemed so difficult

amid the false teachings of our world, offer itself.

Dost thou wish that all should live for thee, that all should love thee better than themselves? There is only one condition in which thy desire can be fulfilled — namely, that all creatures should live for the good of others, and should love others better than themselves. Then only canst thou and all creatures be loved by all, and then only canst thou, among their number, receive that happiness which thou desirest. But if happiness be possible for thee only when all creatures love others better than themselves, then thou, a living creature, must love other creatures more than thyself.

Only under these conditions are the happiness and life of man possible, and only under these conditions is that annihilated which has poisoned the life of man, — that the strife of beings, the torment of suffering, and the fear of death will be annihilated.

What, in fact, has constituted the impossibility of personal existence? In the first place, the strife among themselves of beings in search of their personal happiness. In the second, the delusion of enjoyment which leads life to waste,

to satiety, to suffering, and, in the third, — death. But it is worth while to admit mentally that man replaces the striving for his own personal happiness by a striving for the happiness of other beings, in order that the impossibility of happiness may be annihilated, and that happiness may present itself as attainable to man. Looking upon the world from his idea of life, as a striving after personal happiness, man has beheld in the world a senseless conflict of beings engaged in destroying each other. But it is only requisite that man should recognize the fact that his life lies in a striving after the good of others, in order to see the world in quite a different light; to behold, side by side with chance phenomena of the strife of beings, a constant, mutual service of each other by these beings, — a service without which the existence of the world is inconceivable.

All that is necessary is to admit this and all previous senseless activity, directed towards the unattainable happiness of individuals, will be replaced by another activity, in conformity with the law of the world and directed to the attainment of the greatest possible happiness for one's self and the whole world.

Another cause of the poverty of personal life, and of the impossibility of happiness for man, has been the deceitfulness of personal enjoyments, which waste life, and lead to satiety and sufferings. A man need only mentally admit that his life consists in a striving after the good of others, and the delusive thirst for enjoyments will cease; and the vain, painful activity, directed to the filling of the bottomless cask of animal personality, will be replaced by an activity engaged in maintaining the life of other beings, which is in harmony with the laws of reason indispensable for his happiness, and the torture of personal suffering, which annihilates the activity of life, will be replaced by a feeling of sympathy for others, infallibly evoking fruitful activity which is also the most joyful.

A third cause of the poverty of personal life has been the fear of death. Man has but to admit that his life does not consist in the happiness of his animal personality, but in the happiness of other beings, and the bugbear of death vanishes forever from before his eyes. For the fear of death arises only from the fear of losing the happiness of life with its death in the flesh. But if a

man could place his happiness in the happiness of other beings, i. e., if he would love them more than himself, then death would not represent to him that discontinuance of happiness and life, such as it does represent to a man who lives only for himself. Death, to the man who should live only for others, could not seem to be a cessation of happiness and life, because the happiness and the life of other beings is not only not interrupted with the life of a man who saves them, but is frequently augmented and heightened by the sacrifice of his life.

"But that is not life," replies the troubled and erring consciousness of man. "That renunciation of life is suicide." — "I know nothing about that," replies rational consciousness, — "I know that such is the life of man and that there is no other, and that there can be no other. I know more than that, I know that such a life is life and happiness both for a man and for all the world. I know that, according to my former view of the world, my life and the life of every living being was an evil and without sense; but according to this view, it appears as the realization of that law of reason which is placed in man.

"I know that the greatest happiness of the life of every being, which is capable of being infinitely enhanced, can be attained only through this law of the service of each to all, and, hence, of all to each."

"But, if this can exist as an imaginary law, it cannot exist as an actual law," replies the perturbed and erring consciousness of man. "Others do not now love me more than themselves, and therefore I cannot love them more than myself, and deprive myself of enjoyment, and subject myself to suffering, for their sakes. I have nothing to do with the law of reason; I desire enjoyment for myself, and freedom from suffering. But a strife is now in progress between men, and if I do not struggle also, the others will crush me. It makes no difference to me by what road in imagination the greatest success for all is attained — all I need at present is my own actual greatest happiness," says false consciousness.

"I know nothing about that," replies rational consciousness. "I only know that what thou callest enjoyment will only become happiness for thee, when thou shalt not thyself take, but when others shall give of theirs to thee, and thy enjoyments will become superfluous and suf-

ferings, as they now are, only when thou shalt seize them for thyself. Only then, also, shalt thou free thyself from actual suffering, when others shall release thee from them, and not thou, thyself — as now, when, through fear of imaginary sufferings, thou deprivest thyself of life itself.

"I know that an individual life, a life where it is indispensable that all should love me alone, and that I shall love only myself, and in which I shall receive as much enjoyment as possible, and free myself from suffering and death, is the greatest and most incessant suffering. The more I love myself and strive with others, the more will others hate me and the more viciously will they struggle with me; the more I hedge myself in from suffering, the more torturing will it become, and the more I guard myself against death, the more terrible will it become.

"I know that, whatever a man may do, he will attain to no happiness until he lives in harmony with the law of his life. But the law of his life is not contest but, on the contrary, the mutual service of individuals to each other."

"But I know life only in my own person. It is impossible for me to place my life in the happiness of other persons."

"I know nothing about that," replies rational consciousness, "I only know that my life and the life of the world, which has hitherto seemed to me malicious nonsense, now appear to me as one rational whole, alive and striving towards the same happiness, through submission to one and the same law of reason, which I know in myself."

"But this is impossible to me," says erring consciousness, and at the same time there is not a man who would not have done this impossible thing, who would not have placed in this impossibility the best happiness of his life.

"It is impossible to place one's happiness in the happiness of other beings," yet there is no man who has not known a condition in which the happiness of beings independent of himself has become his happiness.

"It is impossible to place one's happiness in labors and sufferings for others," but a man need only yield to that feeling of compassion, and personal pleasures lose their sense for him, and the force of his life is transferred into toils and sufferings for the happiness of others, and these sufferings and toils become happiness for him.

"It is impossible to sacrifice one's life for the

happiness of others," but a man need only recognize this feeling, and death is not only no longer visible and terrible to him, but it appears as the highest bliss to which he can attain.

A reasoning man cannot fail to see that if we mentally admit the possibility of replacing the striving for his own happiness, with a striving for the happiness of other beings, his life will become rational and happy, instead of senseless and poverty-stricken as before.

He cannot fail, also, to see that, by admitting the same conception of life in other people and beings, the life of the whole world, in place of the incoherence and harshness which were formerly apparent, will become that rational, elevated happiness which alone man can desire, in place of its former incoherence and aimlessness, and that it will acquire for him a rational meaning; to such a man the aim of life appears as the infinite enlightenment and union of beings in the world, towards which life leads, and in which men first, and afterwards all other beings, submitting themselves ever more and more to the light of reason, will understand (what is at present granted to man alone to understand) that the happiness of life is

to be attained, not by the striving of each being towards his own personal happiness, but a united striving of each creature for the good of all the rest.

But this is not all: in the mere possibility of a change of aspiration towards one's own personal happiness, into an aspiration for the good of other beings, man cannot fail to perceive, also, that his gradual, ever increasing renunciation of his individuality, and transference of the object of his activity from himself to other beings, is all a movement in advance of mankind, and of those living beings which stand nearest to man.

Man cannot but see in history that the movement of life in general lies not in the growth and augmentation of the strife between beings among themselves, but, on the contrary, in the diminution of disagreement and in the mitigation of the strife; that the movement of life consists only in this, that the world, through submission to the law of reason, passes from enmity and discord ever more towards concord and unity.

Having admitted this, man cannot but see that those who have been in the habit of slaying prisoners and their children cease to slay them; that

warriors who have taken pride in murder are ceasing to take pride in it; that people who have been in the habit of killing animals are beginning to tame them, and to kill them less; they are beginning to subsist on the eggs and milk of animals, instead of upon their bodies; that they are beginning to restrain their destructiveness, even in the world of plants.

A man perceives that the best representatives of mankind condemn researches for gratification, exhort men to abstinence, and that the very best men, who are lauded by posterity, present examples of the sacrifice of their own existences for the good of others. Man perceives that that which he has only admitted at the demand of reason is the very thing which actually takes place in the world, and is confirmed by the past life of mankind.

But this is not all: more powerfully and convincingly than through either reason or history, and from quite a different source, as it were, does the aspiration of man's heart reveal itself to him, impelling him to immediate happiness; to that very activity which his reason has pointed out to him, and which is expressed in his heart by love.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DEMANDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL APPEAR INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE DEMANDS OF RATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

Reason and judgment and history and his inward feeling, — all, it would appear, should convince a man of the justice of this conception of life; but to the man educated in the doctrines of the world it appears, nevertheless, as though the satisfaction of the demands of his rational consciousness could not be the law of his life.

"Not contend with others for one's personal happiness, not seek enjoyment, not ward off suffering, and not fear death! But that is impossible, that is equivalent to renouncing the whole of life! And how am I to renounce my individuality, when I feel the demands of my individual self, and when I know, by my reason, the legitimacy of these demands?" say the cultivated men of our world, with full conviction.

And here is a noteworthy phenomenon. Laboring men, simple men, who exercise their judgment but little, hardly ever defend the demands of individuality, and always feel in themselves demands opposed to the demands of personality; but an almost complete denial of the demands of rational consciousness and, chief of all, a refutation of the legality of those demands and a defence of the rights of the individual are to be met with only among wealthy, refined people with cultivated judgment.

The cultivated, enervated, idle man will always prove that individuality has its inalienable rights. The hungry man will not demonstrate that a man must eat, he knows that every one knows that, and that it is impossible either to prove or to controvert it; he will only eat.

This arises from the fact that the simple, so-called uncultivated man, having toiled all his life with his body, has not perverted his judgment, but has preserved it in all its purity and force.

But the man who has thought all his life, not only of insignificant, trivial objects, but even of such things as it is unnatural for a man to think of, has perverted his mind; his mind is no longer

untrammelled. His mind is occupied with matter which is foreign to it, with a consideration of the requirements of its individual, — with the development, the augmentation of them, and with devising means to gratify them.

"But I am conscious of the demands of my individuality, and therefore those demands are legitimate," say so-called men of culture, brought up in the teachings of the world.

And it is impossible for them not to feel the demands of their personality. The whole life of these people is directed towards the imaginary satisfaction of the happiness of the individual. But this happiness of the individual seems to them to lie in the gratification of wants. And they call all those conditions of the existence of the individual upon which they have bent their minds, wants. But the wants recognized — those upon which the mind is bent — always grow to unlimited dimensions, in consequence of this recognition. But the satisfaction of these wants veils from them the wants of their real life.

Social science, so-called, places at the foundation of its investigations the doctrine of the requirements of man, forgetful of the circum-

stance, very inconvenient for this doctrine, that no man has any wants at all, like the man who commits suicide or the man who is dying with hunger, or that they are literally innumerable.

There are as many requirements for the existence of the animal man as there are sides to that existence, and these sides are as numerous as the radii in a sphere. Need of food, of drink, of breathing, of the exercise of all the muscles and nerves; need of labor, of rest, of pleasure, of family life; need of science, of art, of religion, of their diversity. Needs, in all these connections, of the child, the youth, the man, the old man, the young girl, the woman, the aged crone, the wants of the Chinese, the Parisian, the Russian, the Laplander. Needs corresponding to the customs of the race, and to maladies. . . .

One might go on enumerating them to the end of his days, without enumerating all in which the wants of the individual existence of man might exist. All the conditions of existence may be wants, and the conditions of existence are innumerable.

Only those conditions which are recognized are called wants. But recognized conditions, as soon

as they are recognized, lose their true meaning, and acquire that always exaggerated meaning which is given to them by the mind directed upon them, and which veils from it its true life.

What are called needs, i. e., the conditions of man's animal existence, may be compared with countless little balls which are capable of being inflated, of which some body or other should have been formed. All the little spheres are equal to each other, and have their own places and are not impeded in any way. As long as they are not inflated, all their wants are equal, and have room, and they do not feel painful until they are recognized. But all that is necessary is to begin to inflate one sphere, and it will occupy more space than all the rest, it will crowd the rest, and be crowded itself. It is the same with wants: all that is required is to direct the rational consciousness upon one of them, and this recognized want takes possession of its whole life and makes the man's whole being suffer.

CHAPTER XX.

WHAT IS REQUIRED IS, NOT RENUNCIATION OF INDIVIDUALITY, BUT ITS SUBJECTION TO RATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

Yes, the assertion that man does not feel the wants of his rational consciousness, but feels only the wants of his individual part, is nothing else than an assertion that our animal desires, to the satisfaction of which we have devoted all our mind, rule us, and have hidden from us our true life as men. The weeds of our thickly grown vices have stifled the germs of true life.

And how can it be otherwise in our world, when it has been admitted and is admitted, by those who consider themselves teachers of others, that the highest perfection of the isolated man is the development on all sides of the refined wants of his personality, that the happiness of the masses lies in this, that they should have many wants, and that they should be able to satisfy them, that the

happiness of men consists in gratifying their wants.

How can men reared in such a doctrine do otherwise than affirm that they do not feel the wants of rational consciousness, but feel only the wants of the individual? And how are they to feel the wants of reason when their entire mind, without reservation, has gone to the increase of their carnal desires? and how are they to renounce the demands of their desires when these desires have swallowed up their whole life?

"The renunciation of individuality is impossible," these people generally say, endeavoring intentionally to turn the question, and placing, instead of an idea of the subjection of the individuality to the law of reason, the idea of the renunciation of it.

"It is unnatural," they say, "and therefore impossible." But no one is talking about renouncing individuality. Individuality is, to the rational man, the same that breath, the circulation of blood, is to the animal. How is the animal personality to renounce the circulation of its blood? It is impossible to discuss this. Equally impossible is it to talk to the rational man about renouncing individ-

uality. Individuality is, for the reasoning man, as indispensable a condition of his life as the circulation of the blood is a condition of the existence of his animal individuality.

Individuality, as an animal individuality, cannot present and does not present any wants. These wants are presented by a falsely directed mind; a mind directed not to a guidance of life, not to its enlightenment, but to the inflation of the carnal desires of individuality.

The wants of the animal are always satisfied. Man cannot say, "What shall I eat?" or "Wherewithal shall I be clothed?" All these wants are guaranteed to man, as to the animal and the bird, if he lives a rational life. And, in fact, who, being a thinking man, can believe that he could diminish the wretchedness of his position by the guarantee of his individuality?

The wretchedness of man's existence arises, not from the fact that he is an individual, but from the fact that he recognizes the existence of his individuality as life and happiness. Only then do contradiction, division, and the suffering of man make their appearance.

The sufferings of the man begin only when he

employs the force of his mind in the strengthening and augmentation to an unlimited extent of the growing wants of his individual, for the sake of concealing from himself the demands of reason.

It is neither possible nor necessary to renounce individuality, any more than in the case of all those conditions under which man exists ; but he neither can nor must admit these conditions as life itself. He may and ought to make use of the given conditions of life, but it is impossible to look, and he must not look, upon these conditions as upon the aim of life. It is not necessary to renounce individuality, but to renounce the happiness of the individual, to cease to recognize the individual as life : this is what man must do in order to return to unity, and in order that that happiness, the striving towards which constitutes his life, may be attainable to him.

"Yes, but what is this? This is Buddhism?" say the people of our day, as a rule, in reply to this. "This is Nirvana, this is standing on a pillar." And when they have said this, it seems to the people of our day that they have overthrown in the most successful manner what all know very well, and which it is impossible to conceal from

any one, that individual life is poverty-stricken and can have no sense.

"This is Buddhism, Nirvana," they say, and it seems to them that with these words they have overthrown all that has been and is confessed by millions of people, and what each of us, in the depths of his soul, knows very well, — namely, that life for the aims of the individual is pernicious and senseless, and that if there is any escape from this perniciousness and senselessness, that escape indubitably leads through the renunciation of the happiness of the individual.

The fact that the larger half of mankind has understood and does understand life thus, the fact that the grandest minds have understood life in the same manner, the fact that it is impossible to understand it otherwise, does not trouble them in the least. They are so firmly convinced that all the questions of life, if not settled in the most satisfactory manner, are set aside by the telephone, operettas, bacteriology, electric lighting, and so on, that the idea of renouncing their individual life appears to them only as an echo from ancient ignorance.

But, in the meanwhile, the unhappy men do not

suspect that the very roughest Hindu, who stands for years upon one leg, in the name only of renunciation of individual happiness for Nirvana, is, without any comparison, a more living man than they, the men of our contemporary European society, who have turned to beasts, who fly all over the world on railways, and exhibit to the whole world, by the electric light, their brutish condition.

That Hindu has understood that in the life of individuality and the life of reason there is a contradiction, and that he is solving it according to his light ; but the men of our cultivated world have not only not comprehended this contradiction, but do not even believe that it exists. The proposition that the life of man is not the existence of the individuality of man, won by the spiritual toil of all mankind prolonged through thousands of years, — this proposition has become for the man (not for the animal) not only as indubitable and unalterable a truth as the revolution of the earth or the laws of gravity, but even more indubitable and unalterable. Every thinking man, learned or ignorant, child or old man, understands and knows this ; it is concealed only from

the savage men of Africa and Australia, and from easy-going people in our European towns and capitals who have become savage.

This truth has become the property of mankind, and if mankind does not retrograde its illegitimate branches of learning, mechanics, algebra, astronomy, still less can it retrograde in the fundamental and chief learning of the definition of his life. It is impossible to forget and erase from the consciousness of man that which he has gathered from his life of many thousand years — the solution of vanity and senselessness, and the wretchedness of individual life. The attempts to resuscitate the savage, antediluvian view of life as an individual existence, with which the so-called science of our European world is engaged, only exhibit more visibly the growth of rational consciousness in mankind, and demonstrate clearly how mankind has already outgrown its childish garments. And the philosophical theories of self-annihilation, and the practice of suicide, which is growing to fearful proportions, prove the impossibility of a return of mankind to the degrees of consciousness already lived through.

Life, as an individual existence, has been out-

lived by mankind, and it is impossible to return to it, and to forget that the individual existence of man has no sense, is impossible. Whatever we may write or say or discover, to whatever point we may perfect our personal life, the renunciation of possible happ ness for the individual remains an incontrovertible truth for every thinking man of our times.

"But, nevertheless, it does revolve."

The point does not lie in overthrowing the proposition of Galileo and Copernicus, and in devising new Ptolemaic circles, — they are no longer to be devised, — but the point lies in proceeding further, in drawing the most extreme conclusions from this proposition, which has already passed into the general knowledge of mankind. The same with the proposition relating to the impossibility of personal happiness, enounced by the Brahmins, and by Buddha, and Laodzi, and Solomon, and the Stoics, and by all the true thinkers of mankind. We must not conceal from ourselves this proposition, and walk around it in all directions, but boldly and clearly confess it, and draw from it the most extreme deductions.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FEELING OF LOVE IS A PHENOMENON OF THE INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY BROUGHT INTO SUBJECTION TO RATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

It is impossible for a rational being to live for the aims of individuality. It is impossible because all roads are prohibited to it, all aims to which the animal individuality is drawn are plainly unattainable. Rational consciousness points out other aims, and these aims are not only attainable, but give full satisfaction to the rational consciousness of man; at first, however, under the influence of false teaching of the world, it seems to man that these aims are opposed to his individuality.

Try as a man may, who has been reared in our world with cultivated, exaggerated desires of the individual, to acknowledge himself as an "I" in his reason, he will not feel in this "I" the aspiration towards life which he feels in his animal person. The "I" of the reason contemplates

life, as it were, but does not itself live, and has no aspirations towards life, but the animal "I" must suffer and therefore remains alone — to free itself from life.

Thus, in bad faith, do the negative philosophers of our times (Schopenhauer, Hartmann) settle the question — philosophers who deny life and who yet remain in it, instead of availing themselves of the possibility of quitting it. And thus, in good faith, do suicides decide this question, by quitting a life which offers them nothing but evil.

Suicide presents to them the only escape from the incoherence of the human life of our times.

The argument of pessimistic philosophy and of the most commonplace suicides is as follows: there is an animal *ego* in which there is an inclination for life. This *ego* and its inclination cannot be gratified; there is another *ego*, of the reason, in which there is no inclination for life, which only critically surveys all the false joy of life, and the passion of the animal *ego*, and rejects all of it.

If I yield myself to the former, I see that I live senselessly, and that I am on my way to misery, plunging ever deeper and deeper in it. If

I yield myself to the latter, to the rational *ego* there remains within me no inclination for life. I see that to live for that for which alone it pleases me to live, for my personal happiness, is awkward and impossible. It would be possible to live for rational consciousness, but there is no object in it, and I do not wish it. Serve that origin from which I proceeded — God. Why? God — if he exists — will find other servitors beside me. But why should I?

It is possible to look on at all this game of life until it becomes tiresome. And when it does become tiresome, I can leave it — I can kill myself. And that is what I do.

This is the contradictory representation of life which mankind had reached before Solomon's day, before Buddha's, and to which the false teachers of our times wish to lead him back.

The wants of the individual are pushed to the most extreme limits of senselessness. The reason on awakening rejects them. But the wants of the individual have grown to such proportions, have so encumbered man's consciousness, that it seems to him that reason rejects the whole of life. It seems to him that if he eradicates from his sense

of life all that his reason rejects, nothing will remain. He does not yet perceive what will remain. The remnant, that remnant in which is life, seems nothing to him.

"But the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

The teaching of the truth recognizes this dilemma — either a senseless existence or a renunciation of it, — and "it solves it."

The teaching which has always been called the doctrine of happiness — the teaching of the truth — has pointed out to people (instead of that deceptive happiness which they seek for their animal personality) — not that they may receive somewhere and at some time, — but that they always possess, here, and now, an inalienable and actual happiness which is always attainable by them.

This happiness is not merely something deduced from reasoning, it is not that something or other which must be sought somewhere, it is not that happiness promised somewhere and at some time, but is that same happiness which is familiar to man, and towards which every unperverted human soul is drawn.

All men know, from the earliest years of their

childhood, that, in addition to the happiness of the animal person, there is still another and better happiness of life, which is not only independent of the gratification of the animal person, but which, on the contrary, becomes all the greater in proportion to the renunciation of the happiness of the animal person.

The feeling which solves all the contradictions of human life, and gives the greatest possible happiness to man, these men know. This feeling is love.

Life is the activity of the animal personality, subjected to the law of reason. Reason is that law to which, for its own happiness, the animal personality of man must be rendered subservient. Love is the only reasonable activity of mankind.

The animal personality inclines to happiness; reason demonstrates to man the delusiveness of personal happiness, and leaves but one path. Activity along this pathway is love.

The animal personality of man demands happiness; rational consciousness shows man the misery of all beings who contend with each other, demonstrates to him that there can be no happiness for his animal individual, shows him that the

only happiness possible to him is one in which there shall be no contest with other beings, no cessation of happiness, no satiety, in which there shall be no prevision or fear of death.

And lo, like a key made for this one lock alone, man finds in his own soul a feeling which gives him that very happiness which his reason indicates to him as the only possible one. And this feeling not only solves the former contradictions of life, but finds in these very contradictions, as it were, a possibility of manifesting itself.

Animal individualities desire to employ for their ends the individuality of man. But the feeling of love inclines him to give his existence for the good of other beings.

The animal individual suffers. And this suffering and its alleviation constitute the chief activity of love. The animal individual, in striving after happiness, strives with every breath towards the greatest evil — towards death, the prevision of which has destroyed every bliss of the individual.

But the feeling of love not only annihilates this fear, but inclines man to the extremest sacrifice of his fleshly existence for the happiness of others.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE FEELING OF LOVE IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR MEN WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF THEIR LIFE.

Every one knows that in the feeling of love there is something peculiar, capable of solving all the contradictions of life, and of giving man that full happiness in the striving for which his life consists.

"But this feeling comes rarely, continues for but a brief time, and its consequences are still worse than suffering," say men who do not understand life.

To these men, love does not present itself as the sole legitimate manifestation of life which it represents to the rational consciousness, but merely as one among thousands of the varied accidents which occur in life; it presents itself as one of those thousands of varied moods in which man finds himself in the course of his existence: there are times when a man parades as a dandy, there are

times when he is attracted by science or art, there are times when he is inclined to service, to ambition, to acquisition ; there are times when he loves some one. The mood of love presents itself to men who do not understand life, not as an essential point in human life, but as an accidental frame of mind, — and hence as independent of their will, like all the others to which man is subject in the course of his life. It is often possible even to read and to hear arguments to the effect that love is something irregular, which disturbs the regular current of life, — a torturing state of mind. Something like what it must seem to the owl when the sun rises.

It is true that even these people feel that there is in the state of love something peculiar and more important than in all other frames of mind. But, not understanding life, these people cannot understand love, and the condition of love seems to them as lamentable and as deceptive as all other conditions.

"Love? — But whom? It is not worth while to love for a time, and to love forever is impossible."

These words may express the confused knowl-

edge of people that in love there is salvation from the misery of life, and the only thing resembling true happiness, and, at the same time, a confession that, for people who do not understand life, love cannot be an anchor of safety. There is no one to love, and all love vanishes. And, therefore, love can be happiness only when there is some one to love, and when it should be some one whom it would be possible to love eternally. And, as there is nothing of the kind, there is no salvation in love, and love is as much of a delusion and suffering as everything else.

And thus, and not in any other way, can people understand love, who have learned and who themselves teach that life is nothing else than an animal existence.

For such people, life does not even correspond to that conception which we all involuntarily connect with the word love. It is not a beneficial activity, giving happiness to the one who loves, and to the person loved. It very frequently happens that love, in the estimation of people who recognize life in the animal person, is the same feeling in consequence of which one mother, for the welfare of her child, will deprive another hun-

gry child of its mother's milk, and suffer with anxiety for the success of the feeding; that feeling which makes the father, to his own torture, take the last bit of bread from hungry men in order to provide for his children; it is the feeling through which he who loves a woman suffers from this love, and causes her to suffer, seducing her, or killing both himself and her out of jealousy; that feeling through which it even happens that a man violates a woman out of love; it is that feeling through which men belonging to one association injure other associations, for the sake of upholding their own fellows; it is that feeling which makes a man torment himself over his favorite occupations, and by these same occupations cause grief and suffering to the people about him; it is the feeling which renders a man unable to endure an insult to his beloved fatherland, strews the plain with dead and wounded, his own countrymen and others.

But even this is not all; the activity of love, for people who recognize life as lying in the happiness of the animal individual, presents such difficulties that its manifestations become not only painful but often impossible. "Love must not be discussed,"

is what is generally said by the people who do not understand life ; "but one must yield to that direct feeling of preference, of passion, for people, which one experiences, — and this is genuine love."

They are right in saying that love must not be argued about, that every argument about love destroys love. But the point lies in this, that only those people can refrain from discussing love who have already applied their reason to the understanding of life, and who have renounced the happiness of individual life ; but those people who have not attained to a comprehension of life, and who exist for the animal person, cannot do otherwise than discuss it. It is indispensable that they should discuss it, in order to be able to give themselves over to that feeling which they call love. Every manifestation of this feeling is impossible to them without discussion, without solving insoluble problems.

In point of fact, men prefer their own child, their own friends, their own wife, their own children, their own country, to all other children, wives, friends, countries, and call this feeling love.

To love generally means to do good. Thus we have all understood love, and we cannot under-

stand it otherwise. And behold, I love my child, my wife, my country, i. e., I desire the welfare of my child, my wife, my country, rather than the welfare of children, wives, and countries. It never happens, and it never can happen, that I should love only my child, or wife, or my own country only. Every man loves his child, and wife, and children, and country, and men in general, together. Meanwhile, those conditions of happiness which, because of his love, he desires for the different objects of his love, are so connected together that every loving activity of man, for one of his beloved beings alone, not only interferes with his activity for others, but accrues to the detriment of others.

And here the questions present themselves — in the name of what love, and how to act? In the name of what love to sacrifice another love, whom to love most, and to whom to do the most good, — to one's own wife and children, or to the wives and children of others? How to serve one's beloved country without infringing upon one's love for one's wife and children and friends?

How, in short, to decide the question as to how much I can sacrifice my own personality which is

necessary for the service of others? How much care may I take of myself, in order to be able, since I love others, to serve them? All these questions seem very simple to people who do not know how to account to themselves for that feeling which they call love; but they are not only not simple — but they are absolutely unanswerable.

And not without a reason did the publican put to Christ the question: "Who is my neighbor?" The answer to these questions seems very easy only to those people who have forgotten the present conditions of human life.

Only in case men were gods, as we imagine them to be, could they love merely chosen people; then only could the preference of some over others be true love. Men are not gods, but find themselves subject to conditions of existence under which all living beings always live upon each other, devouring each other, both in a direct and in a figurative sense; and man, as a reasonable being, must know and see this. He must know that every happiness of the flesh is received by one being only at the expense of another.

However much religious and scientific supersti-

tions may assure men of some future golden age, in which everybody will have enough of everything, the rational man sees and knows that the law of his temporal existence in space is the struggle of all against each, of each against each and against all.

In the pressure and conflict of animal interests which constitute life, it is impossible for men to love selected individuals, as those people who do not understand life imagine. Man, if he loves even selected individuals, can never love more than one. Every man loves his mother, and his wife, and his child, and his friends, and his country, and even all men. And love is not a word only (as all are agreed that it is), but activity directed to the good of others. But this activity does not proceed in any definite order, so that at first the demands of a man's own strong, personal love are the first to present themselves, next the less powerful, and so on. The demands of love present themselves constantly, all at once, without any order. Just now a hungry old man, of whom I am rather fond, comes to me and asks for the food which I am keeping for the supper of my dearly loved children. How can I weigh the

demands of a temporary and less powerful love with the future demands of a stronger love?

These same questions were put by the lawyer to Christ: "Who is my neighbor?" In fact, how are we to decide whom it is necessary to serve, and in what degree: people or our father-land? father-land or our friends? our friends or our own wife? our wife or our father? our father or our children? our children or ourselves? (In order to be in a condition to serve others when this is necessary.)

Surely, all these are the demands of love, and all are so interwoven with each other that the satisfaction of the demands of some deprive man of the possibility of satisfying the demands of the others. If I admit that it is possible not to clothe a shivering child because my children will be in want, some day, of the garment which is asked of me, then I need not yield to other demands of love in the name of my future children.

It is precisely the same in relation to love for one's country, for chosen occupations, and for all men. If a man can deny the demands of the very smallest present love, in the name of the very greatest love in the future, is it not clear

that such a man, even if he desired this with all his heart, will never be in a condition to weigh in what measure he can refuse the demands of the present in the name of the future, and therefore, not being competent to decide this question, he will always choose that manifestation of love which is agreeable to him, i. e., he will act, not in the name of his love, but in the name of his individuality. If a man decides that it is better for him to refrain from the demands of the smallest present love in the name of a future and different manifestation of a greater love, then he deceives either himself or others, and loves no one but himself alone.

There is no love in the future. Love is only activity in the present. And the man who manifests no love in the present has no love.

The same thing also comes to pass in the conception of life, in those people who have no life. If men were animals without reason, they would exist like animals, and would not discuss life ; and their animal existence would be legitimate and happy. It is the same with love ; if men were animals without reason, they would love those whom they do love, their young wolves, their

flock; and they would not know that they love their young wolves or their flock, and they would not know that other wolves love their litter of cubs, and other flocks their comrades in the flock, and their love would be that love and that life which are possible on that plane of consciousness upon which they find themselves.

Men are reasoning beings, and they cannot help perceiving that others cherish the same love for their own, and that therefore these feelings of love must come in conflict and produce something not favorable, but quite opposed to the conception of love.

But if men employ their reason in justifying and strengthening that animal and ill disposed sentiment which they call love, communicating to that sentiment monstrous proportions, then that sentiment becomes not only the reverse of good, but it makes of man — a truth long since established — the most malign and terrible of animals. That takes place which is described in the Gospels: "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" If there were nothing in man except love for himself and his children, there would not be even ninety-nine

hundredths of the evil that now exists among men. Ninety-nine hundredths of the evil among men spring from that false feeling which they, lauding it, call love, and which is as much like love as the life of the animal is like the life of man.

What people who do not understand life call love, is only the familiar preference of some conditions of their personal happiness to others. When a man who does not understand life says that he loves his wife or his child or his friend, he merely says that the presence in his life of his wife or his child or his friend heightens the happiness of his individual life.

These preferences bear the same relation to love that existence bears to life. And as existence is called life by the people who do not know what life is, so the preference of some conditions of personal existence to others is called love by the same people.

These feelings — preferences for certain beings, as, for example, for one's children, or even for certain occupations, for science, for instance, or for art, we also call love; but such feelings of preference, infinitely varied, constitute the whole complication of the visible, tangible animal life of

men, and cannot be called love, because they have not the chief mark of love — activity which has for its aim and end happiness.

The violence of manifestation of these preferences only demonstrates the energy of the animal personality. The violence of preference of some people over others, inaccurately called love, is merely the stock upon which true love, and even its fruits, may be grafted. But, as the stock is not the apple-tree and does not yield fruit, or gives only bitter fruit, instead of sweet, so passion is not love, and does no good to people, or produces still greater evil. And therefore the much vaunted love for wife and children, as well as for friends, brings the greatest evil to the world, not to mention love for science, for art, for one's country, which is nothing else than a preference, for the time being, of certain conditions of the animal life of others.

CHAPTER XXIII.

TRUE LOVE IS THE RESULT OF THE RENUNCIATION OF PERSONAL HAPPINESS.

True love, then, becomes possible, only on the renunciation of happiness for the animal personality.

The possibility of true love begins only when a man has comprehended that there is no happiness for his animal person. Only then will all the sap of his life pass into the one ennobling shoot of genuine love, which has already grown stout with all the powers of the trunk of the wild sapling of the animal person. And the teaching of Christ is the graft for this love. And he himself said this. He said that he, his love, was the one branch which could bring forth fruit, and that every branch which bringeth not forth fruit is cut off.

Only he who has not only understood, but has by his life confessed that he that loves his soul loses it, and that he who hates his soul in this

world preserves it to everlasting life — only he understands genuine love.

"And he who loveth father or mother more than me is unworthy of me. And he that loveth son or daughter more than me is unworthy of me. If ye love them that love you, that is not love; but love your enemies, love them that hate you."

It is not by love for father, or son, or wife, or friends, or good and amiable people, as it is generally thought, that men renounce their individuality, but only as a result of the recognition of the vain existence of the individual, a recognition of the impossibility of its happiness, and therefore as a result of the renunciation of individual life, that man becomes acquainted with real love, and can really love father, son, wife, children, and friends.

Love is the preference of other beings to one's self, to one's animal personality.

The neglect of the nearest interests of the individual, for the attainment of distant aims of the same individual, as is the case with what is generally called love, which has not grown to self-sacrifice, is merely the preference of some beings over others, for one's own individual happiness. True

love, before it becomes an active sentiment, must be a certain condition. The beginning of love, its root, is not a burst of feeling, clouding the reason, as is generally imagined, but is the most rational, luminous, and therefore tranquil and joyous state, peculiar to children and to reasonable people.

This state is a state of affection towards all people, which is inherent in children, but which in grown persons arises only on renunciation, and increases only with the degree of renunciation of individual happiness. How often are we forced to hear the words : "It is all the same to me, I need nothing," and in connection with these words to see an unloving mien towards men. But let every man try, at least once, at a moment when he is ill disposed towards people, to say to himself honestly and from his soul, "It is all the same to me, I need nothing," and, only for a time, to desire nothing for himself, and every man will learn, through this simple, inward experiment, how instantaneously, in proportion to the honesty of his renunciation, all malevolence will disappear, and how, afterwards, affection towards all people will gush from his heart, sealed up to that time.

Love is, in truth, a preference of other beings to one's self, — surely that is the way we all understand love, and it is impossible to understand it otherwise. The amount of love is the amount of the fraction whose numerator my partiality, my sympathy for others, — is not in my power; but the denominator, my love for myself, can be augmented or diminished by me, to infinity, in proportion to the significance which I attribute to my animal personality. But the judgment of our world, concerning love, concerning its grades, is a judgment as to the size of the fraction according to the numerator alone, without regard to the denominator.

Real love always has as its foundation renunciation of individual happiness, and the affection towards all men which arises therefrom. Only upon this universal affection can spring up genuine love for certain people, — one's own relatives or strangers. And such love alone gives the true bliss of life, and solves the apparent contradictions of the animal and the rational consciousness.

Love which has not for its foundation renunciation of individuality, and, as a consequence, affec-

tion for all people, is merely the life of the animal, and is subject to the same and to even greater miseries, and to still greater folly, than life without this fictitious love. The feeling of passion called love not only does not remove the conflict of existences, does not free an individual from the pursuit of enjoyments, and does not save from death, but merely darkens life still more, embitters the strife, augments the thirst for pleasures for one's self and others, and increases the terror of death for one's self and others.

The man who places his life in the existence of the animal individual cannot love, because love must seem to him an activity directly opposed to his life. The life of such a man is only in the happiness of his animal existence ; but love demands, first of all, the sacrifice of that happiness. Even if a man, who does not understand life, should sincerely wish to give himself up to the activity of love, he will not be in a condition to do this, until he understands life, and changes his whole relation to it. The man who seeks his life in the happiness of his animal person, who increases, during the whole course of his life, the means of his animal happiness, by acquiring wealth and hoard-

ing it, will make others serve his animal happiness, and will distribute that happiness among those individuals who have been most useful to him for the happiness of his person. But how is he to give up his life, when his life is supported not by himself, but by other people? And still more difficult will it be for him to choose to which of the persons whom he prefers he shall give the happiness which he has accumulated.

In order to be in a position to give up his life, he must first give away that superfluity which he takes from others for the happiness of his own life; and more than that, he must accomplish the impossible: decide which of the people he is to serve with his life.

Before he will be in a condition to love, that is to do good, sacrificing himself, he must cease to hate, that is, to do evil, and he must cease to prefer some people to others for the happiness of his person.

Only for the man who does not acknowledge happiness in individual life, and who does not, therefore, trouble himself about that false happiness and about that affection, towards all men, proper to man which is set free in him, is the

activity of love, which always satisfies him and others, possible.

The happiness of the life of such a man in love is like the happiness of the plant in the light; and hence, as the covered plant cannot in any way inquire, and does not inquire, in what direction it is to grow, and whether the light is good, whether it must not wait for some other and better light, but takes the only light that exists, and stretches towards it, — thus the man who has renounced individual happiness does not argue about what he must give up of that which he has taken from other people, and to what beloved beings, and whether there is not some better love than the one which makes the demand, — but gives himself, his being, to the love which is accessible to him, and which lies before him. Only such love gives full satisfaction to the reasoning nature of man.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LOVE IS LOVE ONLY WHEN IT IS THE SACRIFICE OF SELF.

And there is no other love than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friend. Love is love only when it is the sacrifice of one's self. Only when a man gives to another, not merely his time and his strength, but when he spends his body for the beloved object, gives up his life for him, — only this do we all acknowledge as love; and only in such love do we all find happiness, the reward of love. And only in virtue of the fact that there is such love towards men, only in this, does the world stand. A mother who nurses her child gives herself directly, her body, for the nourishment of the children, who, were it not for this, would not be alive. And this is love. Exactly in the same manner does every laborer for the good of others give his body for the nourishment of another, when he exhausts his body

with toil, and brings himself nearer to death. And such love is possible only for the man between whom and the possibility of sacrifice of himself and other beings whom he loves there stands no limit to sacrifice. The mother who gives her child to a nurse cannot love it; a man who acquires and hoards his money cannot love.

"If any man say that he is in the light, and hateth his brother, he is still in darkness. If any man love his brother, that man abideth in the light and there is no deceit in him. But he that hateth his brother dwelleth in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because darkness hath blinded his eyes. . . . Let us love not in word or with the tongue, but in deed and truth. And hereby do we know that we are of the truth, and our hearts are set at rest. . . . Love attaineth such perfection in us that we have boldness in the day of judgment, because we so walk in the world even as He walked. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, for in fear there is torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

Only such love gives true life to men.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all

thy heart and all thy soul and all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." And the second is like unto it: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," said the lawyer to Christ. And to this Jesus replied: "Thou hast said rightly, so do," — i. e., love God and thy neighbor — and *thou shalt live.*

True love is life itself. "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren," says a disciple of Christ. "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Only he is alive who loves.

Love, according to the doctrine of Christ, is life itself, but not a senseless, suffering, and perishing life, but a blessed and endless life. And we all know this. Love is not a deduction of the mind, it is not the result of certain activity, but it is the most joyful activity of the life which encompasses us on all sides, and which we all know in ourselves from the first memories of our childhood to the time when the false teaching of the world veils it in our soul and deprives us of the possibility of testing it.

But this is not a partiality for that which enhances the temporal happiness of man's person-

ality, like love towards selected individuals or objects, but that striving towards the good of that which is within man, which will remain in man after the renunciation of the happiness of the animal individuality.

Who among living people does not know that blissful sensation, — even if but once experienced, and most frequently of all in the earliest childhood, before the soul is yet choked up with all that lie which stifles the life in us, — that blessed feeling of emotion, during which one desires to love everybody, both those near to him, his father, and mother, and brothers, and wicked people, and his enemies, and his dog, and his horse, and a blade of grass ; he desires one thing — that it should be well with everybody, that all should be happy, and still more he desires that he himself may act so that it may be well with all, that he may give himself and his whole life to making others comfortable and happy. And this, and this alone, is that love in which lies the life of man.

This love, in which alone is life, manifests itself in the soul of man as a hardly perceptible, tender shoot, in the midst of the coarse shoots

of weeds resembling it, of the various carnal desires of man, which we call love. At first, it seems to men, and to the man himself, that this shoot is the one from which must grow that tree in which the birds shall shelter themselves, — and that all the other shoots are the same.

Men even prefer, at first, the weeds which grow faster, and the only shoot of life is stifled and languishes ; but what is even worse is that which most frequently happens : men have heard that among the number of these shoots there is one which is genuine, life-giving, called love, and, trampling it down, they begin to rear another shoot from the weeds, calling it love.

But, what is still worse, men seize the shoot with rough hands and cry : " Here it is, we have found it, now we know it, let us train it up, love, love ! the most elevated sentiment, here it is ! " and men begin to transplant it, to correct it, and they grasp it, and tread it under foot, until the shoot dies before it has flowered, and these same men or others say : " All this is nonsense, folly, sentimentality."

The shoot of love, when it appears, is tender, it

does not bear handling, it is powerful only when it has attained its growth, — all that men do to it is but the worse for it. It needs but one thing — that men should not hide from it the sun of reason, which alone will promote its growth.

CHAPTER XXV.

MEN'S EFFORTS, DIRECTED TO THE IMPOSSIBLE AMELIORATION OF THEIR EXISTENCE, DEPRIVE THEM OF THE POSSIBILITY OF THE ONE TRUE LIFE.

ONLY the knowledge of the visionary and delusive character of the animal existence, and the setting free within him of the one true life of love, confers happiness upon man. And what steps do men take for the attainment of this happiness? Men, whose existence consists in the gradual annihilation of personality and in the approach of that personality to inevitable death, and who cannot fail to be aware of this, strive in every way, during the whole period of their existence, — to establish that perishing existence, to gratify its desires, and thereby to deprive themselves of the possibility of the only happiness in life — love.

The activity of men who do not understand life is directed, during the entire period of its existence, to a conflict for their own existence, to the

acquisition of enjoyments, to emancipating themselves from suffering, and to putting away from them inevitable death.

But the increase of enjoyment increases the strain of the conflict, the sensitiveness to suffering, and brings death nearer. In order to hide from himself the approach of death, there is but one means: still further to augment pleasure. But the augmentation of pleasures reaches its limits, pleasure cannot be further increased, it passes into suffering and remains only in the form of sensitiveness to suffering and terror before death, which is approaching ever nearer and nearer in the midst of suffering alone. And a false circle makes its appearance: one is the cause of the other and one augments the other. The chief horror in the life of people who do not understand life lies in the fact that what they regard as pleasures (all pleasures of a rich life), being of such a nature that they cannot be shared equally among all men, must be taken from others, must be obtained by force, by evil, by annihilating the possibility of that kindly inclination towards people from which springs love. So that pleasure is always directly opposed to love, and

the stronger it is, the more opposed is it. So that, the stronger, the more intense the activity for the attainment of pleasure, the more impossible becomes the only happiness accessible to man — love.

Life is understood not as it is recognized by the rational consciousness — as an invisible but undoubted submission at every moment of one's animal nature to the law of reason, setting free the affection towards all people which is proper to man, and the activity of love which flows from it, but only as an existence in the flesh during a certain period of time under settled conditions arranged by us, which exclude the possibility of kindliness to all men.

To people of the doctrine of the world, who bend their minds to the organization of fixed conditions of existence, it seems that the augmentation of the happiness of life proceeds from the best external arrangement of one's existence. But the best external arrangement depends upon the exercise of greater violence over men, which is directly opposed to love. So that, the better their organization, the less possibility of love, the less possibility of life, is there left to them.

Having applied their reason not to understanding that the happiness of the animal existence is equal to a cipher, men have recognized this cipher as a quantity which can be augmented or diminished, and in this supposititious augmentation and diminution of the cipher they use all the reason which remains unapplied in them.

Men do not perceive that nothing, however much it may be multiplied, remains the same to every other person, a zero; they do not perceive that the existence of the animal personality of every man is equally wretched, and cannot be rendered happy by any external conditions. Men do not wish to see that no one existence, in the flesh, can be happier than any other, that this is as much a law as that whereby the water on the surface of a lake can nowhere rise higher than the general level. Men who have perverted their understanding do not see this, and apply themselves to this impossible work, and in this elevation of the water in various places above the level of the lake — after the manner of what is done by children bathing, who call it "brewing beer" — passes the whole of their existence.

It seems to them that the lives of men are more

or less happy and good; the existence of a poor laborer or of a sickly man, they say, is evil, unhappy; the existence of a rich or a healthy man is good and happy, and they bend all the strength of their minds to escaping an evil, unhappy, poor, and sickly existence, and in constructing for themselves a good, rich, healthy, and happy one.

They work out for generations the processes for organizing and maintaining these various and happiest of lives, and hand down the programmes of these fancied better lives, as they call their animal existence, to their descendants. Men vie with each other in endeavoring to maintain as well as possible that happy *life* which they have inherited from the organization of their parents, or to organize for themselves a new and still happier *life*. It seems to men that, by maintaining the order of existence which they have inherited, or by establishing a new one which is better, as they imagine, they are accomplishing something.

And thus upholding each other in this delusion, men often become so sincerely convinced that this senseless beating of the water, the absurdity of which is evident to themselves, constitutes life, — they become so convinced of this, that they turn

away with scorn from the summons to true life, which they hear incessantly; both in the teaching of the truth, and the examples of life presented by people who are alive, and in their own suppressed hearts; in which, even to the end, the voice of reason and of love is never stifled.

A wonderful thing takes place. Men, vast numbers of men, who possess the possibility of a life of love and reason, find themselves in the position of those sheep who are being dragged out of a burning house, while they, imagining that people want to fling them into the fire, exert all their strength to contend with those who are trying to save them.

Through fear of death, men do not wish to escape from it; through fear of suffering, men torture themselves, and deprive themselves of the only happiness and life that are possible for them.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FEAR OF DEATH IS ONLY A CONFESSION OF THE UNSOLVED CONTRADICTION OF LIFE.

"THERE is no death," the voice of truth says to men. "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And every one that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

"There is no death," say all the great teachers of the world; and the same say millions of men who understand life, and bear witness to it with their lives. And every living man feels the same thing in his soul, at the moment when his consciousness clears up. But men who do not understand life cannot do otherwise than fear death. They see it, and believe in it.

"How is there no death?" cry these people in wrath and indignation. "This is sophistry! Death is before us; it has mowed down millions, and it will mow us down as well. And you may say as

much as you please that it does not exist, it will remain all the same. Yonder it is!"

And they see that of which they speak, as a man mentally afflicted sees the vision which terrifies him. He cannot handle the vision, it has never touched him; of its intentions he knows nothing, but he is alarmed, and he suffers from this imaginary vision, which is deprived of the possibility of life. And it is the same with death. Man does not know his death, and never can know it; it has never yet touched him, of its intentions he knows nothing. Then what is it that he fears?

"It has never yet seized me, but it will seize me, that I surely know — it will seize me and annihilate me. And that is terrible," say men who do not understand life.

If men with false ideas of life could reason calmly, and think accurately on the basis of that conception which they have of life, they would be forced to the conclusion that in what is produced in my fleshly existence by the change which I see proceeding, incessantly, in all beings, and which I call death, there is nothing disagreeable or terrible.

I shall die. What is there terrible about that? How many changes have taken place, and are now in progress, in my fleshly existence, and I have not feared them? Why should I fear this change which has not yet come, and in which there is not only nothing repulsive to my reason and experience, but which is so comprehensible, so familiar, and so natural for me, that during the whole course of my life I have formed fancies, I still form them, in which the death both of animals and of people has been accepted by me as a necessary and often an agreeable condition of life. What is there terrible about it?

For there are but two strictly logical views of life: one false — that by which life is understood as those seeming phenomena which take place in my body from my birth to my death; and another, the true one — by which life is understood as that invisible consciousness of it which I bear within myself. One view is false, the other is true; but both are logical, and men may hold either the one or the other, but in neither the one nor the other is the fear of death possible.

The first false view, which understands life as the visible phenomena in the body from birth to

death, is as old as the world itself. This is not, as many think, a view of life which has been worked out by the materialistic science and philosophy of our day; the science and philosophy of our times have only carried this view to its extreme limits, by which it becomes more visible than hitherto how little this view corresponds to the fundamental demands of human life; but this is the ancient and primitive view of men who stood upon the lower steps of culture. It is expressed among the Chinese, among the Greeks, and among the Hebrews, in the Book of Job, and in the sentence: "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return."

This view, in its present expression, runs as follows: Life is a chance play of forces in matter, manifesting itself in space and time. And what we call our consciousness is not life, but a certain delusion of the feelings, which makes it appear that life lies in this consciousness. Consciousness is the spark which flashes up from matter under certain conditions of the latter. This spark flashes up, burns, again grows feeble, and finally goes out. This spark, that is to say, consciousness, experienced by matter in the course of a certain time,

between two endless spaces of time, is nothing. And, in spite of the fact that consciousness sees and passes judgment on itself and on all the infinite world, and beholds all the play of chance of this world, — and *chief of all*, in the contrary something that is not accidental, calls this play accident, — this consciousness itself is only the product of dead matter, a vision, appearing and disappearing without any trace or reason. All is the product of matter, infinitely varied; and what is called life is only a certain condition of dead matter.

Such is one view of life. This view is utterly false. According to this view, the rational consciousness of man is merely an accident, accompanying a certain condition of matter; and therefore, what we, in our consciousness, call life, is a phantom. The dead only exists. What we call life is the play of death. With such a view of life, death should not only not be terrible, but life ought to be terrible, as something unnatural and senseless, as it is among the Buddhists, and the new pessimists, Schopenhauer and Hartmann.

The other view of life is as follows. Life is only that which I recognize in myself. But I am

always conscious of my life, not as I have been or as I shall be (thus I meditate upon my life), but I am conscious of my life thus — that I am — that I never begin anywhere, that I shall never end anywhere. No comprehension of time and space is connected with my consciousness of life. My life is manifested in time, in space, but this is merely its manifestation. But the life itself of which I am conscious makes itself perceptible to me outside of time and space; so that, according to this view, it appears, not that the consciousness of life is a phantom, but all that which is dependent upon space and is visionary in time.

And, therefore, a curtailment of the bodily existence, so far as connected with time and space, has nothing wretched about it, according to this view, and can neither shorten nor destroy my true life. And, according to this view, death does not exist.

There could be no fear of death according to either view of life, if men held strictly to either the one or the other.

Neither as an animal, nor as a rational being, can man fear death; the animal has no consciousness of life and does not see death, and the

rational being, having a consciousness of life, cannot see in the death of the animal anything except a natural and never ending movement of matter. But if man fears, what he fears is not death, which he does not know, but life, which alone he does know, and his animal and rational existence. That feeling which is expressed in men by the fear of death is only the consciousness of the inward contradiction of life; just as the fear of ghosts is merely a consciousness of a sickly mental condition.

"I shall cease to be, I shall die, all that in which I set my life will die," says one voice to a man.

"I am," says another voice, "and I cannot die, and I ought not to die. I ought not to die, and I am dying."

Not in death, but in this contradiction lies the cause of that terror which seizes upon a man, at the thought of death of the flesh: the fear of death lies not in the fact that man dreads the curtailment of his animal existence, but in the fact that it seems to him that that will die which cannot and must not die. The thought of future death is only a transference to the future of the

death which takes place in the present. The phantom which presents itself of a future death of the flesh is not an awakening of the thought of death, but, on the contrary, an awakening of the thought of the life which a man should have and which he has not.

This feeling is similar to that which a man would experience on awaking to life in his grave, under ground. "There is life, but I am in death, and here it is, death!" He imagines that what is and must be will be annihilated. And the mind of man mourns and grows afraid. The best proof of the fact that the fear of death is not the fear of death, but of false life, is this, that men frequently kill themselves from the fear of death.

Men are not terrified by the thought of the death of the flesh because they are afraid that their life will end with it, but because the death of the flesh plainly demonstrates to them the necessity of a true life, which they do not possess. And this is why people who do not understand life are so disinclined to think of death. To think of death is exactly the same with them as to confess that they are not living as their rational consciousness demands.

People who fear death, fear it because it represents emptiness and darkness to them; but they behold emptiness and darkness because they do not see life.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE DEATH OF THE FLESH ANNIHILATES THE BODY WHICH BELONGS TO SPACE AND THE CONSCIOUSNESS WHICH BELONGS TO TIME, BUT IT CANNOT ANNIHILATE THAT WHICH CONSTITUTES THE FOUNDATION OF LIFE: THE SPECIAL RELATION OF EVERY CREATURE TO THE WORLD.

But if men who do not see life would only approach nearer to the phantoms which alarm them, and would examine them, they would perceive that for them also they are only phantoms, and not realities.

The fear of death always proceeds, in these people, from the fear of losing, at their death in the flesh, their special *ego*, which, they feel, constitutes their life. I shall die, my body will moulder and destroy my *ego*. But my *ego* is that which has lived in my body so many years.

Men prize this *ego* of theirs; and, assuming that this *ego* corresponds with their fleshly life, they draw the deduction that it must be annihilated with the destruction of their fleshly life.

This is a very common deduction, and it rarely enters any one's head to doubt it, and, nevertheless, this deduction is entirely arbitrary. Men — both those who consider themselves materialists, and those who regard themselves as spiritualists — have become so habituated to the notion that their *ego* is the consciousness of their body, which has lived so many years, that it never enters their heads to verify the authenticity of such a conviction.

I have lived fifty-nine years, and during the whole of that time I have been conscious of myself in my body, and this consciousness of myself has, as it seems to me, been my life. I have lived: neither fifty-nine years, nor fifty-nine thousand years, nor fifty-nine seconds. Neither my body nor the length of its existence in any way determines the life of my *ego*. If I, at every moment of my life, ask myself in my own consciousness, "What am I?" I reply: "Something thinking and feeling," i. e., bearing itself to the world in its own entirely peculiar fashion.

Only this *ego* do I recognize as my *ego*, and nothing more. As to when and where I was born, when and where I began to think and to feel as I now think and feel, I know absolutely

nothing. My consciousness merely says to me: "I am, I am with that relation of mine to the world in which I find myself at the present moment."

Of my birth, my childhood, my period of youth, of middle age, of times not very far past, I often remember nothing at all. But if I do recall anything, or if I am reminded of something in my past, then I remember — and remember it almost exactly as those things which are told me about others.

On what foundation, therefore, do I affirm that, during the whole course of my existence, I have been but *one* I? My body, assuredly, never has been and is not one: my body has always been, and is ceaselessly wasting substance — through something immaterial and invisible, which recognizes this which flows through it as my body. My whole body is changed once in every decade; nothing has been left of the old: muscles and inward parts, and bones, and brain, — all have undergone a change.

My body is one only because there is something immaterial which admits this changing body as one, and its own. This immaterial something is

that which we call consciousness: it alone holds the whole body together, and recognizes it as one and its own. Without this knowledge of myself as separate from everything else, I should know nothing of my own or of any other life. And therefore, on first thinking the matter over, it appears that the foundation of all — consciousness — must be constant. But this is incorrect; and consciousness is not constant. During our whole life, and even now, there is repeated that phenomenon of sleep, which seems to us very simple because we all sleep every day, but which is decidedly incomprehensible, if we admit what is self-evident, that consciousness is often entirely suspended during sleep.

Every twenty-four hours, during the period of profound slumber, consciousness is entirely suspended, and is afterwards resumed. But in the meantime, this same consciousness is the only basis upon which the whole body is held together, and recognized as its own. It would seem as though, on the suspension of consciousness, the body should fall apart, and lose its independent existence; but this does not happen either in natural or artificial sleep.

But not only is the consciousness which binds the whole body together periodically interrupted, without the body falling apart, — this consciousness, in addition, changes like the body. As there is nothing in common with my body of ten years ago and my present body, — as it is not one and the same body, so there has not been one consciousness in me. My consciousness as a child three years of age, and my present consciousness are as different as is the matter of my body now from what it was thirty years ago. Consciousness is not a unit, and there is a series of successive states of consciousness, which might be subdivided to infinity.

So that even that consciousness which holds the whole body together, and recognizes it as its own, is not a unit, but something which is suspended and which undergoes change. Consciousness, a single consciousness of one's self, as we generally imagine it, does not exist in man, as there is not one body. There is in man neither one and the same body nor one of that thing which sets apart this body from every other — there is no consciousness which is constantly the same, throughout the whole life of a man, but there is only a

series of successive states of consciousness, in some manner united — and, nevertheless, man feels himself to be himself.

Our body is not one, and that which recognizes this changing body to be one and ours is not continuous in point of time, but is merely a series of changing states of consciousness, and we have already lost both our body and our consciousness many times; we lose our body constantly, and we lose our consciousness every day, when we fall asleep, and every day and hour we feel in ourselves the alteration of this consciousness, and we do not fear it in the least.

Hence, if there is any such thing as our *ego* which we are afraid of losing at death, then that *ego* cannot reside in the body which we call ours, nor in that consciousness which we call ours for a certain time, but in some other, whole series of successive states of consciousness united into one.

What is this something which binds in one all the states of consciousness which succeed each other in point of time? What is my same radical and peculiar *ego*, which is not composed of the substance of my body and of the series of states

of consciousness which proceed in it, but that fundamental *ego* upon which as upon a cord are strung, one after the other, the various consciousnesses, which follow each other in point of time? The question seems very profound and wise, but there is not a child who would not know how to answer it, and who would not utter the response twenty times a day.

"But *I* love this and I don't love that."

These words are very simple, but in them lies the solution of the question as to the peculiar *I* which binds all consciousnesses in one. It is that *I* which loves this thing and does not love that. Why one loves this and does not love that, no one knows, and, at the same time, it is this which constitutes the foundation of life for every man, and it is that which binds in one all the conditions of consciousness, varying in point of time, of every individual man.

The external world acts upon all men alike, but the impressions of men, even when under the very same conditions, differ infinitely, both in the number received and in their capacity for being infinitely subdivided, and in their strength. From these impressions is formed the series of succes-

sive states of consciousness of every man. But all these successive consciousnesses are connected only because, even in the present, some impressions act, and others do not act, upon his consciousness. But certain impressions act or fail to act upon a man only because he loves this more or less, and does not love that.

Only in consequence of this greater or lesser degree of love is a certain series of some judgments, and not of others, formed. So that only in the property of loving one more or less, and not loving the other, lies that peculiar and fundamental *ego* of man, in which all the scattered and fragmentary senses are united. And this property, although it is developed in our life, is borne by us, all ready prepared, into this life, from some past invisible and unknown to us.

This peculiar property of men, of loving one thing in a greater or less degree and not loving another, is usually called character. And by this word there is often understood the peculiar qualities of each individual man, which have taken form in consequence of certain conditions of place and time. But this is an error.

The fundamental quality of man, of loving one

thing more or less and not loving another, does not proceed from conditions of time and space, but, on the contrary, conditions of time and place act or do not act upon a man only because man, on his entrance into the world, already has a very decided property of loving one and not loving another. Only from this cause does it happen that men, born and reared in identical conditions of time and space, often present the sharpest contrast in their internal *ego*.

That which unites in one all the different senses, which, in their turn, bind our body in one, is a very definite thing, although independent of conditions of time and place, and is brought into the world by us from the realm of the spaceless and the timeless : it is that *something*, which lies in my well known, exclusive relations to the world, and is my genuine and acting *ego*. I understand myself as that fundamental quality, and other men, if I know them, I know only as some peculiar relations to the world. On entering into serious spiritual communion with men, none of us, surely, is guided by their external marks, but each of us seeks to penetrate into their nature, that is, to understand what is their relation to the world,

what they love and in what degree, and what they do not love.

Every being is separate; if I know a horse, a dog, or a cow, and have any spiritual relations with them, I do not know them by their external marks, but by that peculiar relation to the world in which each one of them stands, — by the fact that each one of them, and in every degree, loves and does not love. If I know the special and various races of animals, then, strictly speaking, I know them not so much by their external marks, as because each one of them — the lion, the fish, the spider — presents a general peculiar relation to the world. All lions, as a rule, love one thing, and all fish another, and all spiders a third; only because they love differently are they distinguished in my imagination as different living creatures.

But what I do not yet distinguish in each of these creatures, his special relation to the world, does not prove that he has not been, but only that the peculiar relation to the world which constitutes the life of a single, individual spider is remote from that relation to the world in which I find myself, and that therefore I have not yet understood him as Silvio Pellico understood his individual spider.

The basis of all that I know about myself, and about all the world, is that peculiar relation to the world in which I find myself, and in consequence of which I see other beings, who are in their own peculiar relations to the world. But my relation to the world has not been settled in this life, and did not begin with this body, nor with the series of senses which have followed each other in point of time.

And, therefore, my body, bound in one by my temporal senses, may be annihilated, and even my temporal existence may be annihilated, but that which cannot be annihilated is my peculiar relation to the world, which constitutes my peculiar *ego* from which has been created for me all that is. It cannot be annihilated, because it alone has existence. If it did not exist, I should not know the series of my consecutive judgments, I should not know my body, I should not know my own life or any other. And, therefore, the annihilation of the body and the senses cannot serve as a sign of the annihilation of myself and judgment, cannot serve as a sign of the destruction of my peculiar relations to the world, which neither began nor arose in this life.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FEAR OF DEATH PROCEEDS FROM THE FACT THAT MEN ACCEPT AS LIFE ONE SMALL AND LIMITED PORTION OF IT WITH THEIR OWN FALSE IDEA.

We are afraid of losing, at the death of the flesh, our special *ego*, uniting the body and a series of conscious states, which manifest themselves in time, into one; but, nevertheless, this, my peculiar *ego*, did not begin with my birth, and, therefore, the suspension of a certain temporary consciousness cannot annihilate that which unites in one all states of consciousness in time.

The death of the flesh actually destroys that which holds the body together — the consciousness of temporary life. But this happens with us invariably, and every day when we fall asleep. The question lies here — does the death of the flesh destroy that which unites all the consecutive states of consciousness into one, that is to say, my special relation to the world? In order

to verify this, it is necessary first to demonstrate that this special relation to the world, which unites in one all succeeding states of consciousness, was born with my birth in the flesh, and that it will, therefore, die with it. But this is not so.

Reasoning upon the foundation of my consciousness, I see that what binds all my states of consciousness into one is a certain impressibility towards one thing, and a coldness towards another, in consequence of which one remains, while the other disappears in me, the degree of my love for good and of my hatred for evil, — that is, my peculiar relation to the world, which constitutes me, my special *me*, is not the result of any external cause, but is the fundamental cause of all the other phenomena of my life.

Reasoning upon the foundation of observation, it seems to me at first that the causes of my special *ego* are to be found in the peculiarities of my parents, and in the conditions which have influenced them and me; but, on proceeding further in this path of reasoning, I cannot fail to perceive that if my special *ego* lies in the peculiarities of my parents, and the conditions which have

affected them, then it lies also in the peculiarities of all my ancestors, and in the conditions of their existence, so that my special *ego* has been produced outside the limits of all space, and outside of all time, that is, that it is the very thing which I recognize it to be.

In this, and only in this foundation, independent of time and space, of my special relation to the world, uniting all the states of consciousness within my memory, and all those states which preceded memory, of my life (as Plato puts it, and as we all feel it in our lives), in that foundation, in my special relation to the world, is there that special *ego*, as to which we fear that it will be annihilated at the death of the flesh.

But it is merely necessary to understand that what unites all states of consciousness in one, that what is the special *ego* of a man, is to be found independent of time, that it always has been and is, and that what can suspend itself is only a series of states of consciousness, within a given time, — in order to make it clear that the destruction of the last state of consciousness in point of time, at the death of the flesh, can as little destroy man's true *ego* as his daily slumber. For no man ever

feared to fall asleep, although in sleep precisely the same thing takes place as at death, namely, a temporary suspension of consciousness. Man is not afraid of going to sleep, although the suspension of consciousness is precisely the same as in death, — not because he has reasoned it out that he has gone to sleep and waked again, and that therefore he will wake again (this reasoning is inaccurate: he might wake a thousand times and not waken on the thousand and first); no one ever goes through this reasoning, and this reasoning could not reassure him; but man knows that his real *ego* lives independent of time, and that therefore the suspensions of his consciousness which manifest themselves in time cannot destroy his life.

If a man were to fall asleep, as in the fairy tales, for a thousand years, he would go to sleep as tranquilly as for two hours. For consciousness which is not temporary but of true life, a break of a million years and of eight hours are all the same, because for such a life, time does not exist.

The body is annihilated, the consciousness of the present day is annihilated.

But it is surely time for man to become accustomed to the changes of his body, and to the replacement of temporary states of consciousness by others. For these changes began as long ago as man can remember himself, and have proceeded uninterruptedly. Man does not fear the change in his body, and not only is he not terrified, but he often desires to hasten these changes, he desires to grow up, to become a man, to recover health. A person has been a red piece of flesh, and all his consciousness has consisted in the demands of the stomach; now he is a bearded, sensible man, or a woman loving her grown-up children! . . .

Surely there is nothing similar either in body or mind, and man has not been terrified by these changes which have brought him to his present condition, but he has only welcomed them. What is there terrible about the impending change? That in which all these changes are effected, — a special relation to the world, — that in which consists the consciousness of the true life, did not begin with the birth of the body, but independently of the body and independently of time. Then how can any change connected with time

and space destroy that which is not connected with it? Man fixes his eyes upon a small, insignificant bit of his life, does not wish to see all of it, and trembles lest this tiny fragment which is dear to him should be lost. This recalls the anecdote of the madman who imagined that he was made of glass, and who, when he was thrown down, said, "Smash!" and immediately died. In order that a man may have life, he must take the whole of it, and not that small scrap of it, which reveals itself in time and space. To him that taketh the whole of life there shall be added, but from him that taketh a portion of it shall be taken away even that which he hath.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LIFE IS A RELATION TO THE WORLD. THE MOVEMENT OF LIFE IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW, HIGHER RELATION, AND THEREFORE DEATH IS THE ENTRANCE UPON A NEW RELATION.

We cannot understand life otherwise than as a certain relation to the world : thus do we understand life in ourselves, and thus do we understand it in other beings.

But we understand life in ourselves not only as a relation to the world once existing, but as the establishment of a new relation to the world through greater and ever greater subjection of the animal personality to the reason, and the appearance of a greater degree of love. The inevitable destruction of the fleshly existence, which we see in ourselves, proves to us that the relation in which we stand to the world is not permanent, but that we are compelled to establish another. The establishment of this new relation, i. e., the movement of life, also destroys the conception of death.

Death presents itself only to that man who has not recognized his life as lying in the establishment of a rational relation to the world, and its manifestation in ever increasing love, and who has remained in this relation, i. e., in that degree of love to one thing and dislike to another, with which he entered upon existence.

Life is an unceasing movement, but by remaining in the same relation to the world, by remaining in the same degree of love, with which he entered life, he feels its cessation and death presents itself to him.

And death is visible and terrible to such a man only. The whole existence of such a man is one constant death. Death is visible and terrible to him not only in the future, but in the present, at all manifestations of the diminution of animal life, from youth to old age, because the movement of existence from childhood to manhood only seems like a temporary augmentation of strength, while it is, in reality, merely a hardening of the limbs, a decrease of flexibility, of vitality, never ceasing from birth to death. Such a man beholds death constantly before him, and cannot save himself from it by any means whatever. The situation of

such a man becomes worse and worse with every day and hour, and nothing can improve it. His special relation to the world, love to one and lack of love for another, seems to such a man only one of the conditions of his existence; and the only business of life, the establishment of a new relation to the world, the increase of love, appears to him as a useless matter. His whole life is passed in the impossible effort to escape from the inevitable diminution of life, the hardening and weakening of it from old age and death.

But it is not thus for the man who understands life. Such a man knows that he brought his peculiar relation to the world into his present life, his love for one and his dislike for the other, from his hidden former life. He knows that this love of his to one and dislike to the other, which has been brought into his existence by himself, is the very essence of his life; that this is not an accidental property of his life, but that this alone possesses the movement of life — and he places his life in this movement alone, in the augmentation of love.

Looking at his past in this life, he perceives, from the series of the conscious states which he

remembers, that his relation to the world has changed, that his submission to the law of reason has increased, and that the strength and scope of his love have grown constantly — giving him ever more and more happiness, independent of and sometimes directly contrary to it in proportion to the decrease of the personal existence.

Such a man, having received his life from a past that is invisible to him, acknowledging its constant and unbroken growth, transfers it to the unseen future, not only calmly but also joyfully.

It is said: sickness, old age, infirmity, relapse into childhood are annihilation of the consciousness and of the life of man.

For what man?

I imagine to myself, according to tradition, John the Divine fallen into childishness from old age. According to tradition, he merely said: "Brethren, love one another." The old man of a hundred years, who can hardly move, mumbles, with tearful eyes, ever the same words: "Love one another." In such a man the animal existence hardly dawns — it is all devoured by new relations to the world, by a new existence which has not yet established itself in the fleshly man.

For a man who understands life as lying in that in which it really does lie, to speak of the decrease of his life in sickness and old age, and to grieve over this, is the same as though a man, on approaching the light, were to bewail the decrease in his darkness, in proportion to the nearness of his approach to the light. And to believe in the destruction of one's life because the body is destroyed is the same as believing that the destruction of the shadow of an object, after that object has stepped into the full light, is a sure sign of the destruction of the body itself. Such conclusions could be drawn only by a man who has gazed so long upon the shadow alone that he has finally imagined that it is the object itself.

But for the man who knows himself not as a reflection in an existence defined by time and space, but by his growth in a loving relation towards the world, the destruction of the shadow of the conditions of time and space is merely a sign of a greater degree of light. The man who, understanding his life as that certain special relation to the world, with which he entered into existence, and which has grown in his life by the augmentation of love, believes in his annihilation, is the

same as a man who, being acquainted with the external and visible laws of the world, believes that his mother found him under a cabbage leaf, and that his body will suddenly fly off somewhere, so that nothing will remain of it.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LIFE OF DEAD MEN IS NOT ENDED IN THIS WORLD.

But even more plain does the superstition about death become, I will not deny, when looked at from another side, but according to the very constitution of life, as we know it. My friend, my brother has lived precisely like myself, and he has now ceased to live like me. His life has been his consciousness, and it has been passed in the conditions of his bodily existence; that is to say, there is no place or time for the manifestation of his consciousness, and he does not exist for me. My brother has been, I have had relations with him, but now he is not, and I shall never know where he is.

"The bond between him and us is broken. He does not exist for us, and, in like manner, we shall not exist for those who remain behind. What is this if not death?" So speak the people who do not understand life; these people are in a visible

suspension of external communication, an indubitable proof of actual death. But on no occasion does the visionary character of the conception of death more clearly and more visibly disappear than on the suspension of the fleshly existence of people who are near to us. My brother is dead; what has happened? That has happened which is accessible to my observations in time and space; the manifestation of his relation to the world has disappeared from before my eyes, and nothing has been left behind.

"Nothing has been left behind," — thus would speak a chrysalis, a cocoon, which had not yet released the butterfly, on seeing that the cocoon lying beside it has been left empty. But the cocoon might say this if it could think and speak, because, on losing its neighbor, it would, in reality, no longer feel it in any way. It is not thus with man. My brother has died; his cocoon, it is true, has been left empty. I do not see him in the form in which I have hitherto seen him, but the fact that he has disappeared from my vision has not destroyed my relations to him. I retain, as the expression goes, a remembrance of him.

A remembrance remains, — not a remembrance

of his hands, his face, his eyes, but a remembrance of his spiritual form.

What is this remembrance? such a simple and comprehensible word as it seems! The forms of crystals and animals disappear, — no remembrance of them remains among crystals and animals. But I retain a remembrance of my friend and brother. And this remembrance is all the more vivid in proportion as the life of my friend and brother was in conformity with the law of reason, and in proportion as it revealed itself in love.

This recollection is not merely a representation, but this recollection is something of the sort which acts on me, and acts precisely as the life of my brother did at the period of his earthly existence. This memory is that same invisible, immaterial atmosphere of his which encompassed his life and acted upon me and upon others during his earthly existence, exactly as it acts upon me after his death. This remembrance demands of me now, after his death, the same that it demanded of me during his lifetime.

And this is not all; this recollection has become more obligatory for me since his death than it was during his life. That force of life which resided

in my brother has not only not vanished nor suffered diminution, but has not even remained the same; it has increased, and acts more powerfully upon me than before.

The force of his life after his death in the flesh has the same action as before his death, or an even more powerful one, and acts as though still truly living.

On what grounds can I, feeling in myself that power of life, precisely like what it was during the existence in the flesh of this brother, i. e., as his relation to the world, elucidating to me my relation to the world, assert that my dead brother has no longer life? I can say that he has quitted that lower relation to the world in which he stood as an animal, and in which I still find myself, — and that is all; I can say that I do not see the new centre of relation to the world in which he now stands; but I cannot deny his life, because I am conscious of its power upon me. I have gazed upon the reflecting surface of the way in which a man holds me; the reflecting surface has grown dim, I no longer see how he holds me, but I feel in all my being that he still holds me as before, and hence that he exists.

But this is not all; this life of my dead brother, which is invisible to me, not only acts upon me, but enters into me. His special, living *ego*, his relation to the world, becomes my relation to the world. In the establishment of his relation to the world, he elevates me, as it were, to that step to which he has himself risen, and that succeeding step to which he has already ascended, vanishing from my vision, but drawing me with him, becomes clearer to me, to my special, living *ego*. Thus I am conscious for myself of the life of that brother who has fallen asleep in the death of the flesh, and, therefore, I cannot doubt it. But by observing the action in the world of this life which has disappeared from my sight, I am still more indubitably convinced of the reality of this life which has passed beyond the reach of my eyes. The man is dead, but his relation to the world continues to act upon men, and not as during life, but in a vast number of cases more powerfully, and this action is heightened in proportion to its wisdom and love, and it grows like every living thing, never ceasing, and knowing no suspension.

Christ died a very long time ago, and his existence in the flesh was brief, and we have a clear

idea of his person in the flesh ; but the power of this wise and loving life, his relation to the world, and nothing else, acts to the present day upon millions, who receive his relation to the world into themselves, and live according to it. What is it that acts ? What is it that was formerly bound up with the existence of Christ in the flesh, and which constitutes the continuation and the growth of this same life of his ? We say that it is not the life of Christ, but its results. And, having uttered these words utterly destitute of meaning, it seems to us that we have said something clearer and more definite than that this power is the living Christ himself.

Surely, this is exactly the way in which ants might talk, who are clustered about an acorn which has grown up and become an oak ; the acorn has sprung up and become an oak, and it tears up the soil with its roots, drops branches, leaves, and fresh acorns, it screens from the light, the rain, changes everything that formerly grew around it completely. "This is not the life of the acorn," say the ants, "but the results of its life, which came to an end when we dragged off the acorn and threw it into a hole."

My brother died yesterday, or a thousand years ago, and the same force of his life which acted during his existence in the flesh continues to act still more powerfully on me and on hundreds, thousands, millions of people, in spite of the fact that the centre of the power of his temporary existence in the flesh, which was visible to me, has disappeared from my sight.

What does this mean?

I have seen the light of grass burning before me. This grass has died away, but the light has only increased; I do not see the cause of this light, I do not know what is burning, I cannot conclude that the same fire which consumed the grass is now consuming the distant forest, or something else which I cannot see.

But the light is such that I not only see it now, but it alone guides me and gives me life. I live by this light. How can I deny it?

I cannot think that the power of this life has now another centre, invisible to me. But deny it I cannot, because I feel it. I live and move in it. What this centre, what this life is in itself, I cannot know — I can guess, if I like guessing, and if I am not afraid of becoming entangled. But if I

am in search of a rational comprehension of life, I content myself with the clear and indubitable, and I do not wish to spoil the clear and indubitable by combining with it obscure and arbitrary surmises. It is enough for me to know that all that by which I live has been formed from the life of those who have lived before me, and of men who have died long since, and that, hence, every man who fulfils the law of life, submitting his animal personality to reason, and to the manifestation of the power of love, has lived and does live after the disappearance of his corporeal existence in other people, — in order that the clumsy and alarming superstition of death should never again torment me.

We can also observe this in people who have left behind them a force which continues to act, because these people, having submitted their personality to reason, and yielded up their lives to love, could never doubt, and have not doubted, the possibility of the annihilation of this life.

In the life of such people we can also find the grounds of their faith, in life everlasting, and again, having penetrated into our own life, we can find these grounds in ourselves. Christ said that he

should live after the disappearance of the semblance of life. He said this because already, during the period of his corporeal existence, he had entered upon that true life which cannot be brought to an end. Already, during the time of his corporeal existence, he lived in the rays of the light from that other centre of life, to which he was going, and during his lifetime he saw how the rays of that light illuminated the people about him. The same thing is seen by every man who renounces his personality and lives a life of love and reason.

However contracted may have been the sphere of man's activity — whether he be Christ or Socrates, a good, obscure, self-sacrificing old man, a youth, a woman — if he lives, renouncing his personality, for the happiness of others, he already enters here, in this life, upon that new relation to the world which is the business of this life for all men.

The man who has placed his life in subjection to the law of reason, and the manifestation of love, already beholds in this life, on one side, the rays of light from that new centre of life towards which he is travelling, and, on the other, the action which

this light, passing through him, produces upon those about him. And this gives him an unwavering faith in the impossibility of the decrease of life, in its immortality and in every augmentation of life. It is impossible to receive faith from any one, it is impossible to convince one's self of immortality. In order to have faith in immortality it is necessary that the latter should exist; and in order that the latter should exist it is necessary to understand one's life in that in which it is immortal. Only he can believe in a future life who has performed his work of life, who has established in that life that new relation to the world which does not, as yet, find a place in the world.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE SUPERSTITION OF DEATH ARISES FROM THIS, THAT MAN CONFOUNDS HIS DIFFERENT RELATIONS TO THE WORLD.

YES, if we look upon life in its true significance, it becomes difficult even to understand by what the terrible superstition of death is supported.

Thus, if you examine that which has frightened you in the dark as a phantom, you can never again, by any means, revive that visionary fear.

The fear of losing that which alone is, arises only from the fact that life appears to man not only in a relation of his mental consciousness to the world, which is known but invisible to him, but also in two relations which are unknown though visible to him: those of his animal consciousness and his body to the world. All that exists presents itself to man: (1) as a relation of his rational sense to the world; (2) as a relation of his animal consciousness to the world, and (3) as a

relation of the matter of his body to the world. Not understanding that the relation of his rational consciousness to the world is his sole life, man imagines his life as still lying in the relation of his animal consciousness to the world, and he is afraid of losing his special relation to the world, when the former relations of his animal person and of the matter which constitutes him shall have been destroyed.

To such a man it appears that he proceeds from the movement of matter passing to the stage of a personal animal consciousness. It seems to him that this animal consciousness passes into rational consciousness, and that afterwards this rational consciousness grows weak, passes back again into the animal, and that the animal finally weakens and passes into the dead matter from which it was derived.

But the relation of his rational consciousness to the world seems to him from this point of view something accidental, unnecessary, perishable. From this point of view, it seems to him that the relation of his animal consciousness to the world cannot perish — that his animal will be continued in his species; that the relation of

matter to the world can be annihilated in any way, and eternally; but that the most precious thing — his rational consciousness — is not only not eternal, but is only a reflection of something unnecessary and superfluous.

And man feels that this cannot be. And therein lies the fear of death. In order to save themselves from this fear, some men try to assure themselves that their animal consciousness is their rational consciousness, and that the immortality of the animal man, that is to say, of his race, satisfies the demand for the immortality of the rational consciousness, which they bear within them. Others try to convince themselves that a life which has never previously existed, which suddenly reveals itself in corporeal form, and vanishes in it, will rise again in the flesh and live. But belief in either is impossible for men who do not recognize life as residing in the relation of the rational sense to the world. If it is evident to them that the continuation of the human race does not satisfy the ever recurring demand for the immortality of one's individual *ego;* and the idea of life beginning again includes in itself an idea of a suspension of life, and if life never existed formerly,

has not always existed, then it cannot exist afterwards.

For both classes of men, the earthly life is a wave. From dead matter a person is developed, from the person a rational consciousness, the crest of the wave; having risen to their height, the waves, rational consciousness and individuality, fall back in the same place from which they started, and are annihilated. Human life is the visible life, for both classes. Man has grown up and become mature, and died, and after death there can be nothing for him, — that which comes after him and proceeds from him remains; neither posterity nor deeds can satisfy him. He pities *himself*, he fears the cessation of *his* life. That this life of his, which has begun here on earth, in his body, and which has here come to an end, that this life will revive again of itself, he cannot believe.

Man knows that if he has not existed before, and if he has made his appearance from nothing, and has died, that he, his special person, will never exist longer, and that it cannot be. Man recognizes the fact that he will only die when he has recognized the fact that he has never been

born, that he always has existed, does exist, and will always exist. Man will only believe in his immortality when he comprehends that his life is not a wave, but is that eternal movement which reveals itself in this life only as a wave.

It seems that I shall die, and my life will come to an end, and this thought tortures and frightens me because I am sorry for myself. And what will die? For what do I feel compassion? What am I from the ordinary point of view? First of all, I am flesh. What then? Am I afraid for that, am I sorry for that? It seems not: my body, matter, can never be lost, anywhere nor any part of it. Hence, this part of me is secure, there is nothing to fear for this part. All will be preserved in its entirety.

But no, people say, that is not what I pity. I pity Lyef Nikolaevitch, Ivan Semyonitch. But no one is any longer what he was twenty years ago, and every day he is a different person. How then do I pity myself? No, they say, that is not it, I do not pity that. I pity my consciousness, my *ego*.

But this consciousness of yours has not always been one, but several; it was one thing a year

ago, it was something still more different ten years ago, and utterly different still earlier. Does your present consciousness please you so greatly, that you are so sorry to lose it?

If it had always been the same in you, then it might be understood, but it has done nothing but change. You do not see and cannot find its beginning, and, all of a sudden, you desire that there shall be no end to it, that this consciousness now existing in you shall exist forever. You have been moving on ever since you can remember. You came into this life you yourself know not how, but you know that you came as that special *ego* which you are, and then moved on and on until you have reached the half-way point, and, all of a sudden, you do not exactly rejoice or fear, but you have begun to resist, and you do not wish to stir from the spot, because you do not see what there is ahead. But neither did you see the place from which you came, but you came, nevertheless; you have entered at the entrance gate, and you do not wish to go out through the gate of exit.

Your whole life has been a progress through corporeal existence; you have advanced, you have hastened your pace, and all at once you have been

seized with pity because that very thing is being accomplished which you have yourself done incessantly. The great change in your position at the death of your body is terrible to you, but the same great change took place with you at your birth, and not only did nothing bad come of it for you, but, on the contrary, so good a thing came of it that you do not wish to part with it.

What can frighten you? You say that you are sorry for yourself with your present feelings and thoughts, with such views of life, with your present relations to the world.

You are afraid of losing your present relation to the world. What relation is it? In what does it consist?

If it consists in your thus eating, drinking, reproducing your race, building a dwelling, dressing yourself, bearing yourself this way or that to other people and animals, then this is the relation of every man, as a reasoning animal, to life, and this relation cannot disappear; such have been, and are, and will be millions, and their posterity will be preserved as indubitably as every fragment of matter. The instinct for the preservation of their race is inherent in all animals with

such force, that there is no occasion to fear for it. If you are an animal, there is nothing for you to fear; and if you are matter, there is still less anxiety as to your immortality.

But if you are afraid of losing that which is not animal, you fear to lose your special rational relation to the world — that with which you entered upon this existence: but you know that this did not have its source at your birth: it exists independently of the animal, which is born, and therefore cannot be dependent upon its death.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE VISIBLE LIFE IS A PART OF THE ENDLESS MOVEMENT OF LIFE.

My earthly life and the lives of all other men present themselves to me thus: —

I and every living man find ourselves in this world with a certain, well defined relation to the world, with a certain degree of love. It seems to us at first that our life begins with this relation of ours to the world, but observation of ourselves and others shows us that this relation to the world, and the degree of love of each one of us, did not begin with this life, but were brought into life by us from a past that is concealed from us by our birth in the flesh; moreover, we see that the whole course of our life here is nothing but a never ceasing augmentation of our love, which will never come to an end, but which will only be veiled from our eyes by the death of the flesh.

Our visible life appears to me like a section of a cone, the apex and base of which are concealed

from my mental vision. The narrowest portion of the cone represents my relation to the world, from which I first recognize myself; the widest part is that higher relation to life, to which I have now attained. The beginning of this cone, its apex, is concealed from me in the time of my birth, the continuation of the cone is hidden from me, both in my corporeal existence and in my death in the flesh. I see neither the apex of the cone, nor its base: but I recognize its nature without any doubt from that part of it in which my visible life, as it comes within my recollection, passes. It seems to me at first that this section of a cone is the whole of my life; but in proportion to the movement of my true life, I see on one hand that what constitutes the foundation of my life lies behind it, outside of its bounds; according to the measure of my life I feel more clearly and vividly my bond with my past which is invisible to me.

On the other hand, I see how this foundation rests upon my invisible future. I feel more clearly and vividly my bond with the future, and I come to the conclusion that the life which is visible to me, my earthly life, is but a small portion of my whole life, from both its ends — before birth and after

death — undoubtedly existing, but concealed from my present knowledge. And therefore, the cessation of the visibility of life, after the death of the flesh, as well as its invisibility before my birth, does not deprive me of the indubitable knowledge of its existence before birth and after death. I enter life with certain ready-prepared qualities of love for the world outside of me; my corporeal existence, short or long, passes in an augmentation of this love, which I brought into life, and hence I conclude, without any doubt, that I lived before my birth, and that I shall live not only after my momentary present life, in which I find myself at present as I meditate, but after every other momentary time, either before or after my corporeal death, as well.

Looking outside of myself at corporeal beginnings and endings of the existence of other people (even of beings in general), I perceive that one life seems longer, another shorter; one makes its appearance earlier, and continues to be visible to me for a longer time; another makes its appearance later, and is concealed from me again very quickly; but I see in all the revelation of one and the same law; for every true life, — an increase of

love, — like the broadening out of the rays of life.

Sooner or later the curtain falls, concealing from me the temporary course of the life of men, but the life of all men is one and the same, and, like every life, it has no beginning and no end. And the fact that a man has lived for a longer or a shorter time in the conditions of this existence which are visible to me cannot present any difference of the whole in the true life.

The fact that one man has taken longer to pass across the field which is open to my vision, or that another has passed quickly across it, can by no means cause me to ascribe more reality to the life of the first, or less to the second. I know beyond a doubt that if I have seen a man pass my window, whether fast or slowly, it makes no difference,—I know beyond a doubt that the man existed before the time when I saw him, and that he will continue to exist even when he has disappeared from my sight.

But why do some pass quickly, and others slowly? Why does the old man, dried up and morally hardened, incapable, according to our view, of fulfilling the law of life — the increase in love — live on, while a child, a young man, a maiden, a

man in the full strength of his spiritual life, dies, passes beyond the bounds of this fleshly life, when, according to our ideas of the matter, he has only just begun to establish in himself a just relation to life.

The deaths of Pascal and Gogol are comprehensible; but how about Chevrier, Lermontoff, and thousands of other men, who, as it seems to us, had but just begun their inner labor, which might have been, as it seems, completed here?

But this only seems so to us. None of us knows anything about the foundations of life which are brought into the world by another, and of that movement of life which has taken place in him; of those obstacles to the movement of life which exist in that being; and, chief of all, of those other conditions of life, possible, but unseen by us, in which, in another existence, the life of that man might be placed.

It seems to us, as we look at the blacksmith's work, that the horseshoe is completely ready, — that it needs only a couple of blows, — but he breaks it, and throws it into the fire again, knowing that it is not thoroughly smelted.

We cannot know whether the work of the true

life is accomplished in a man or not. We only know this so far as we ourselves are concerned. It seems to us that a man dies when it is not necessary, but this cannot be so. A man dies only when it is indispensable for his happiness, just as a man grows up and attains to manhood only when that is necessary for his happiness.

And in fact, if by life we mean life and not its semblance, if true life is the foundation of everything, its foundation may depend upon what it produces: — the cause cannot depend upon or proceed from the result, — the course of true life cannot be destroyed by a change in its manifestation. The movement, begun but not completed, of the life of man towards that world, cannot be suspended because he has an abscess, or because bacteria attack him, or because some one shoots him with a pistol.

Man dies only because the happiness of his true life cannot be enhanced, in this world, and not because his lungs pain him, or because he has a cancer, or because a bomb has been thrown at him. It generally appears to us that to live a life in the flesh is natural, and that it is not natural to perish by fire, water, cold, lightning, sickness, a

pistol, a bomb; — but it is only necessary to reflect seriously, looking from one side upon the life of men, in order to perceive that, on the contrary, it is quite unnatural for a man to live a corporeal life in the midst of these deadly conditions, in the midst of the wide-spread and, for the most part, deadly, and innumerable bacteria.

And therefore, the corporeal existence, in the midst of all these destructive conditions, is, on the contrary, something of the most unnatural sort, in the sense of the materialists. If we are alive, it is not in the least because we support ourselves, but because we fulfil the business of life. The work of life comes to a close, and nothing can arrest the never-ceasing destruction of the animal life of man, — this destruction is accomplished, and one of the most intimate causes, which always accompany the life of man, the death of the flesh, seems to us its exclusive cause.

Our true life exists; we know it alone; from it alone we know the living life, and therefore, if its semblance be subjected to immutable laws, then why should not that which this semblance performs, be subject to laws also?

But we are troubled because we do not see the

cause and action in external manifestations: we do not know why one person enters life with such and such properties of his *ego*, and another person with others, why the life of one is broken off, and another continues. We ask ourselves: what, before my existence, were the causes of my being born such as I am? And what will be the result after my death, of my living thus or in some other way? And we complain because we receive no answers to our questions.

But to complain because I cannot understand now much that happened before my life and that will take place after my death, is the same as complaining because I cannot see what is beyond the limits of my vision.

For if I saw what is beyond the limits of my vision, I should not see what is within its bounds. But, for the happiness of my animal, I must see all that goes on around me.

And it is the same with the mind, by means of which I know. If I were able to see what is beyond the range of my intellect, I should not see what is within its range. But for the happiness of my true life, it is necessary to know all that to which I must submit then and now my animal

person, in order to attain the happiness of life. And my mind reveals to me in this life that sole path along which I do not perceive a cessation of my happiness.

It demonstrates to me indubitably that this life did not begin with birth, but that happiness always exists, — it demonstrates that this happiness of life grows and increases here, reaching such an extent that it cannot be contained, and only then does it pass beyond my conditions, which restrict its augmentation, and pass into another existence.

Reason sets a man upon that sole path of life, which, like a cone-shaped, widening tunnel, enclosed in the centre on all sides by its close walls, opens to him afar off the indubitable immortality of life and its happiness.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE INEXPLICABILITY OF THE SUFFERINGS OF THE EARTHLY EXISTENCE PROVES TO MAN, MORE CONVINCINGLY THAN ANYTHING ELSE, THAT HIS LIFE IS NOT A LIFE OF PERSONALITY, WHICH BEGAN AT HIS BIRTH AND WHICH ENDS AT HIS DEATH.

But even if a man could not help fearing death, or thinking of it, the sufferings alone, fearful, aimless, — utterly unjustifiable, irreparable sufferings to which he is subject, would be sufficient to destroy every rational idea ascribed to life.

I am engaged in a work for others which is undoubtedly good, and all of a sudden I am seized with an illness, which interrupts my undertaking and exhausts and tortures me, without sense or reason. A screw has grown rusty on the rails, and it must needs be that on that very day when it flies out, in the very train and carriage, a good woman should be travelling — a mother, and it must needs be that her children should be crushed before her very eyes. In an earthquake, precisely

that spot sinks on which stands Lisbon or Vyerny, and perfectly innocent people plunge headlong, alive, into the earth, and die in terrible agony. What sense is there in this? Why did this happen to these people, and why thousands of other senseless, frightful cases of suffering, which astound men?

The explanations of reason make nothing clear. Such explanations always dodge the actual question, and only prove the more conclusively its insolubility. I have fallen ill because some microbes or other have flown to me; or the children were crushed before their mother's eyes in the train because the dampness had acted in such and such a way on the iron; or Vyerny sank because of the existence of certain geological laws. But the real question is, why just these particular people were subjected to such terrible sufferings, and how I am to avoid such occasions of suffering?

To this there is no answer. Reflection, on the contrary, plainly demonstrates to me that there are no laws according to which one man is subject, but another man is not subject to these accidents, that there is an incalculable quantity of such acci-

dents, and that therefore, whatever I do, my life is liable every second to all the innumerable chances of the most terrible suffering.

For if people drew only those deductions which inevitably follow from their view of the world, people who understand their life as a personal existence would not remain alive for a minute. Certainly, not a single laborer would live under a master who, on hiring the laborer, should stipulate for the right, on every occasion when he should see fit, to roast the laborer alive on a slow fire, or to flay him alive, or to pull out his sinews, and to commit all those horrors in general which he perpetrates upon his laborers, in the presence of the man hiring himself, without cause or explanation.

If people really did understand life thoroughly, as they say that they do, not one of them would remain alive in this world, from pure fear of all those torturing and utterly inexplicable sufferings which they see around them, and into which they might fall at any second.

But people, in spite of the fact that they are all acquainted with the various easy ways of killing themselves, of escaping from this life filled with

such harsh and inconceivable sufferings, — people live on; they complain, they weep over the sufferings, and go on living.

It is impossible to say that this arises from the fact that there is more pleasure than suffering in this life, because, in the first place, not only has simple reflection shown, but philosophical investigations have also demonstrated, that all earthly life is a series of sufferings, which is far from being redeemed by its enjoyments; in the second place, we all know, both from ourselves and from others, that people in positions which present nothing but a series of increasing sufferings, without any possibility of alleviation except by death itself, do not, nevertheless, kill themselves, but cling to life.

There is but one explanation of this strange contradiction: men all know, in the depths of their own soul, that all sorts of sufferings are always indispensable to the happiness of their lives, and they only go on living foreseeing them or submitting to them. But they rebel against suffering because, with their false view of life, which demands happiness only for their personality, the interference with this happiness, which does not

lead to evident happiness, must appear as something inconceivable, and therefore disturbing.

And people take fright before suffering, they are amazed at it, as though at some utterly unexpected and incomprehensible thing. But, at the same time, man is reared on sufferings, his whole life is a series of sufferings undergone by him and imposed by him on other beings, and it would seem as though it were time for him to have become accustomed to suffering, and not to quail before it, and not to ask himself why and to what end his sufferings. Every man, if he will but reflect, will see that all his enjoyments are purchased by the sufferings of other beings, that all his sufferings are indispensable for his enjoyment, that without suffering there is no enjoyment, that suffering and enjoyment are two contrary states, one being evoked by the other, and each indispensable to the other.

Then what mean the questions, "Why?" — "To what end is suffering?" which the reasoning man puts to himself? Why does a man, who knows that suffering is bound up with enjoyment, ask himself, "Why?" — "To what end is suffer-

ing?" while he does not ask himself, "Why?" —"To what end are enjoyments?"

All life of the animal, and of man as an animal, is an unbroken chain of sufferings. All the activity of the animal, and of man as an animal, calls forth only suffering. Suffering is a painful sensation which calls forth activity, which banishes this painful sensation and calls forth a state of pleasure. And the life of the animal, and of man as an animal, is not only not suspended by suffering, but is perfected only by suffering. Suffering, therefore, is that which moves life, and hence it is what it should be; then what does man ask about when he asks: "Why and to what end is suffering?"

The animal does not ask this.

When the perch, in consequence of hunger, torments the dace, when the spider tortures the fly, the wolf the sheep, they know that they are doing what must be, and that they are accomplishing the very thing which must be fulfilled; and therefore, when the perch and the spider and the wolf fall into the same torments from those stronger than they, they know, as they flee, and resist and wrench themselves away, that they are doing what must be done, and therefore there cannot be the

slightest doubt in them that what is happening to them is precisely that which must be so.

But a man, occupied only with the healing of his legs when they have been torn off on the battlefield, upon which he has torn off the legs of others, or occupied only in passing his time as comfortably as possible in a solitary cell in jail, after having directly or indirectly consigned others to that place, or a man who cares only for fighting himself free and fleeing from the wolves, who are rending him, after having himself slain thousands of animals and eaten them, — a man cannot regard what happens to him as what must be, because, in submitting to these sufferings, he did not do all that he should have done, and, therefore it seems to him that something is happening to him which should not be.

But what should a man do, who has been torn by wolves, except flee and fight free from them? — That which it is the proper place of a man as a rational being to do; confess the sin which suffering has caused, repent of it, and confess the truth.

The animal suffers only in the present, and therefore the activity called forth by the suffering of the animal directed upon itself in the present

fully satisfies it. But man suffers not only in the present, but he suffers also in the past, and therefore the activity called forth by the suffering of man, if concentrated only upon the present of the man's animal, cannot satisfy him. Only activity directed to the cause as well, and to the results of suffering, both upon the past and upon the future, satisfies the suffering man.

The animal is locked in and tears himself from his cage, or his foot is sore and he licks the spot that pains him, or he devours another and rids himself of him. The law of his life is broken from within, and he concentrates his activity upon restoring it, and he fulfils that which must be. But a man — I myself or some one closely connected with me — is in prison, or I lose my legs, or some one nearly related to me loses his legs in battle, or wolves rend me: the activity devoted to flight from prison, to the healing of my legs, to fighting myself free from wolves, does not satisfy me, because confinement in prison, pain in my leg, and the being torn by wolves, constitute only a very small portion of my suffering.

I perceive the cause of my suffering in the past, in my errors and in the errors of other people, and

if my activity is not directed to the cause of the suffering — to the errors, and if I do not try to free myself from it, I do not do that which should be done, and therefore suffering presents itself to me in a way in which it should not, and not only in fact but in imagination does it grow to frightful proportions, which exclude all possibility of life.

The cause of suffering for the animal is the violation of the law of animal life; this violation makes itself known by a consciousness of pain, and the activity called forth by the violation of the law is directed to the removal of the pain; the cause of pain for rational consciousness, is the violation of the law of life of rational consciousness; this violation reveals itself in a consciousness of error, of sin, and the activity called forth by the violation of the law is directed to the removal of the error — the sin. And as the suffering of the animal calls forth activity directed to pain, and this activity deprives suffering of its torture, so the sufferings of a rational being call forth activity directed to error, and this activity frees suffering from its acuteness.

The questions, "Why?" and, "To what purpose?" which make their way into the soul of

man, on the experience of the imagination of suffering, only show that man has not recognized that activity which should be called forth in him by suffering, and which frees suffering from its torture. And in fact, for the man who recognizes his life as lying in his animal existence, there can be none of that activity which frees from suffering, and the less so as he already understands his life.

When a man, who recognizes personal existence as his life, finds the cause of his personal suffering in his personal errors, he understands that he has fallen ill because he has eaten something injurious, or that he has been beaten because he himself went out to fight, or that he is hungry and naked because he would not work, — he will know that he suffers because he has done that which he should not have done, and in order that he may do so no more, and that, directing his activity to the extinction of error, he shall not rebel against suffering, but bear it lightly, and often joyously.

But when suffering attacks such a man, exceeding the bounds of the bond of suffering and error which are visible to him, when he suffers from causes which have always existed in his own per-

sonal activity, or when the results of his suffering can be in no way advantageous either to himself or to any other person, it seems to him that he is overtaken by that which should not be, and he asks himself: Why? to what purpose? and, finding no object upon which to direct his activity, he rebels against suffering and his suffering is converted into terrible torture. But the greater part of man's suffering is always such that its causes or its consequences — sometimes the one, and sometimes the other — are concealed from him in space and time; hereditary diseases, unhappy accidents, bad harvests, collisions, conflagrations, earthquakes, and so on, which end in death.

The declaration that this is necessary in order to furnish a lesson for the people of the future, that they must not yield to those passions which are reflected in the diseases of their descendants, or that they must build trains better, or handle fire with more caution, — all these explanations give me no answer at all. I cannot admit that my life lies in the illustration of the oversights of other people; my life is my life, with my aspirations for happiness, and not an illustration for other lives. And these explanations are fit only for the purpose

of discussion, and do not alleviate that fear in the presence of the senselessness of the suffering which threatens me, and which excludes all possibility of life.

But if it were even possible to understand in any way that, while causing other people to suffer through my errors, I myself bear the sufferings of others; if it were possible to understand even remotely that every suffering is a punishment for an error which must be rectified by men in this life, there still remains a long series of sufferings which are in no way explicable.

Wolves rend a man who is alone in the forest, a man is drowned, frozen, or burned up, or simply falls ill alone and dies, and no one ever knows how he suffered, and there are thousands of such cases. Of what use can this be to any one?

For the man who understands his life as an animal existence, there is not, and there cannot be, any explanation, because, for such a man, the bond between suffering and error lies only in the manifestations which are visible to him, and this bond is utterly lost from his mental vision in the sufferings which precede death.

A man has two alternatives of choice: either,

not recognizing the connection between the sufferings which he has experienced and his life, to continue to endure the greater part of his sufferings as tortures, utterly devoid of reason, or to admit that my errors and deeds committed in consequence of them — that my sins, whatever they may be — are the cause of my sufferings, and that my sufferings are a release and redemption for my sins and the sins of other people, whatever may be their nature.

Only these two attitudes towards suffering are possible : one, according to which suffering is that which should not exist, because I do not perceive its external significance, and the other that it is just what it should be, because I know its inward significance for my true life. The first proceeds from recognizing my separate, individual life, as the happiness of all happiness. The second proceeds from the recognition of the bliss of my whole past and future life, as lying in its unbroken connection with the happiness of other men and creatures.

According to the first view, there is no explanation for sufferings, and they call forth no other activity than a constantly increasing despair and

bitterness, which are not to be alleviated. According to the second, suffering evokes that same activity which constitutes the movement of true life, — a consciousness of sin, a release from error, and submission to the law of reason.

If it is not man's reason, then it is the torture of suffering which forces him, willingly or unwillingly, to confess that his life is not placed in his personality, that this personality is only the visible part of his whole life, that the external bond between cause and effect, visible to him in his personality, does not coincide with that internal bond of cause and effect, which is always known to man through his rational consciousness.

The bond of error and suffering, visible to the animal only under conditions of time and space, is always clear to a man, outside of those conditions in his consciousness. Suffering of any sort, man always recognizes as the result of his sin, whatever it may have been, and repentance for his sins as a release from suffering and the attainment of happiness.

A man's whole life, from the first day of his childhood, consists in this alone : in the acknowledgment, through suffering, of sin, and in the

freeing himself from suffering. I know that I came into this life with a certain knowledge of the truth, and that the greater my error the greater have been my sufferings and the sufferings of others, — that the more I have freed myself from error, the less have been my sufferings, and the more happiness have I attained. And, therefore, I know that the greater that knowledge of the truth which I carry out of this world, and which is given me by my sufferings, even by my last sufferings which precede death, the greater is the happiness that I have attained.

The torture of suffering is experienced only by the man who, having separated himself from the life of the world, and not perceiving those sins of his by which he brought his sufferings into the world, regards himself as an animal, and who, therefore, rebels against all those sufferings which he endures for the sins of the world.

And, strange to say, that very thing which is clear to the reason, mentally, is confirmed in the sole and true activity of life, in love. Reason says that a man who confesses the connection of his sins and his sufferings with the sins and sufferings of the world frees himself from the torture of suffering; love indeed confirms this.

The half of every man's life is passed in sufferings, which he not only does not recognize as torturing, and which he does not perceive, but which he regards as his happiness only because they are borne as the results of error, and as a means of alleviating the sufferings of beloved individuals. So that the less love there is, the more is man subjected to the anguish of suffering; the more love there is, the less acuteness of suffering is there; but a thoroughly rational life, whose entire activity is manifested only in love, excludes the possibility of all suffering. The anguish of suffering is only that pain which men experience on their attempt to break that chain of love to their ancestors, to their descendants, to their contemporaries, which unites the life of a man with the life of the world.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

BODILY SUFFERINGS CONSTITUTE AN INDISPENSABLE CONDITION OF THE LIFE AND HAPPINESS OF MEN.

"But, nevertheless, it is painful, it is oppressively painful. Why this pain?" men ask.

"Because this is not only necessary for us, but because we cannot live without its being painful to us," that man would answer us who has caused our pain, and has rendered it as little painful as possible, and has made as much happiness out of this "pain" as possible.

For who does not know that the very first sensation in us of pain is the first and principal means of preserving our bodies, and for the prolongation of our animal life? Bodily pain protects the animal person. And while pain serves as a protection to the person, as is the case with the child, pain cannot be that frightful torture, such as we know pain to be, at the times when we are in the full strength of our rational consciousness and

resist pain, seeing in it that which it should not be.

Pain in the animal and the child is very well defined and small in size, never attaining that degree of anguish which it reaches in beings endowed with rational consciousness. In the case of the child, we see that he sometimes cries as pitifully from the bite of a flea as from the pain which destroys the internal organs.

And the pain of a being which does not reason leaves no traces whatever in the memory. Let any man endeavor to recall his childish sufferings from pain, and he will see that he is incapable of even reconstructing them in his imagination. Our impression at the sight of the suffering of children and animals is our suffering more than theirs. The external expression of suffering in unreasoning beings is immeasurably greater than the suffering itself, and hence it evokes our sympathy in a far greater degree, as can be observed in diseases of the brain, in fevers, in typhus, in all sorts of agony.

In those days when the rational consciousness has not yet been awakened, and pain serves only as a protection to the person, it is not acute; in

that same period when there is in man a possibility of rational consciousness, it is the means of subjugating the animal personality to the reason, and in proportion to the awakening of that consciousness does it become less and less acute.

In reality, only when we find ourselves the complete master of our rational consciousness can we talk of sufferings, because only with this consciousness does life begin, and that condition of it which we call suffering. In this condition the sensation of pain can rise to the greatest and descend to the most insignificant dimensions. Who, in fact, does not know, without studying physiology, that there is a limit to sensibility, that, when pain exceeds a certain point, sensibility either comes to an end in a swoon, insensibility, a fever, or that death supervenes? Hence the augmentation of pain is a very accurately defined quantity, which cannot exceed certain bounds. But the sensation of pain can be infinitely augmented by our relations to it, and in the same way it can be decreased to infinite minuteness.

We all know how a man can, by submitting to pain, by acknowledging it as what must be, carry

it to insensibility, to a sensation of joy, even, in undergoing it.

Not to mention the martyrs, not to mention Huss, who sang in the fire at the stake, — simple men, merely out of a desire to exhibit their courage, endure without a cry or a quiver what are considered the most torturing of operations. There are bounds to the augmentation of pain, to the diminution of sensation under it there is no limit.

The anguish of pain is really frightful for people who consider their lives as lying in the existence of the flesh. And how can it fail to be terrible to them when that force of reason bestowed upon man for the annihilation of acute suffering is directed only to its augmentation ?

As Plato has a myth relating how God first fixed the period of man's existence at seventy years, but afterwards, on perceiving that men were the worse for it, altered it to what it now is, that is to say, arranged it so that men do not know the hour of their death, — just so surely would reason have decided what is, the myth narrating how men were first created without any

sensation of pain, but that afterwards it was arranged as it is for their happiness.

If the gods had created men without the feeling of pain, men would very soon have begun to beg for it; women lacking the pains of childbirth would have brought forth children under conditions where but few of them would have remained alive, children and young people would have spoiled their whole bodies, and grown people would never have known either the errors of those who had lived before them, and of people now living, nor, what is the most important of all, their own errors, — they would not have known what they must do in this life, they would have had no rational object of existence, they could never have reconciled themselves to the idea of impending death in the flesh, and they would have had no love.

For a man who understands life as a submission of his personality to the law of reason, pain is not only not an evil, but is an indispensable condition both of his animal and his rational life. Were there no pain, his animal personality would have no indication when it had trangressed its laws: if rational consciousness suffered no pain, man

would not know the truth, would not know his law.

"But you talk," people retort to this, "about your personal sufferings, but how can you reject the sufferings of others? The sight of these sufferings constitutes the most acute suffering," say people, not in full sincerity.

The suffering of others? But the sufferings of others — what you call sufferings — have not ceased and will not cease. The whole world of men and animals suffers and has never ceased to suffer. Is it possible that we have learned this only to-day? Wounds, mutilations, cold, diseases, every sort of heart-rending accident, and, chief of all, the pains of birth, without which no one of us made his appearance in this world, — surely, all these are indispensable conditions of existence. Surely, this is the very thing the alleviation of which, the assistance of which forms the substance of the rational life of men, — the very same thing upon which the true activity of life is directed.

An understanding of the sufferings of personality added to men's errors, and activity directed towards their diminution, constitutes the whole

business of human life. That is just why I am a man, — an individual, — in order that I may understand the sufferings of other individuals, and that is why I am a rational consciousness, in order that in the sufferings of every other separate individual I may see the general cause of suffering — error, and may eradicate it in myself and in others. How can the material of his work be a cause of suffering to the workman? It is the same as though a ploughman were to say that unploughed soil was his suffering.

Unploughed land can be a source of suffering only for him who would like to see the field ploughed, but who does not consider it the business of his life to plough it.

Activity directed to the immediate loving service of the suffering and to the diminution of the general cause of suffering — error — is the only joyful labor which lies before a man, and gives him that inalienable happiness in which his life consists.

There is, for a man, but one suffering, and it is that suffering which makes a man, voluntarily or otherwise, give himself up to that life in which there is for him but one happiness.

This suffering is the consciousness of the contradiction between my own sinfulness and all the world, and not only the possibility but the obligation of realizing, not by some one or other, but in my own person, the whole truth in my own life and in that of all the world.

It is impossible to alleviate this suffering either by sharing the sins of the world, or by seeing one's own sin, or yet by ceasing to believe not only in the possibility, but also in the duty of any one else, but in my own, to realize all truth in my life and in the life of the world. The first only augments my suffering, the second deprives me of the force of life. Only the consciousness and activity of true life alleviate this suffering, by annihilating the disproportion between individual life and its aim, as acknowledged by man.

Voluntarily or otherwise, man must acknowledge that his life does not hedge in his person from birth to death, and that the object recognized by him is an object that can be attained, and that, in his striving towards it, in the acknowledgment of his greater and greater sinfulness, and in the greater and greater realization of all the truth in his life, and in the life of the world, consists, has

consisted, and always will consist, the business of his life, which is inseparable from the life of the whole world.

If rational consciousness does not drive a man, with his will or against it, to the only true path of life on which there are no obstacles, no evil, but only an indestructible, ever growing, never beginning, never ending happiness, then the suffering which flows from error as to the sense of his life will so drive him.

CONCLUSION.

The life of man is a striving after happiness, and that for which he strives is given to him.

Evil in the form of death and suffering is visible to man only when he takes the law of his corporeal, animal existence for the law of his life. Only when he, being a man, descends to the level of the animal, does he see death and suffering. Death and suffering breathe sighs upon him from all quarters, like bugbears, and drive him upon the one path of human life which is open to him, subservient to his law of reason, and expressing itself in love. Death and suffering are only crimes committed by man against his law of life. For a man who lives according to his law, there is no death and no suffering.

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

"For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." (Matt. xi.)

The life of man is a striving towards good; that towards which he strives is given to him; life cannot be death, and good cannot be evil.

APPENDIX I.

People generally say: "We study life not from the consciousness of our own life, but outside of ourselves, in general." But this is the same as saying: "We look at an object not with our eyes, but outside of ourselves, in general."

We behold the objects outside of ourselves because we see them in our eyes, and we know life outside of ourselves only because we know it in ourselves. And we see objects only as we see them in our eyes, and we define life outside of ourselves only as we know it in ourselves. But we know life in ourselves as a striving after good. And therefore, without a definition of life as a striving after good, it is impossible not only to observe, but even to see life.

The first and principal act of our consciousness as living beings consists in our including many different objects in our conception of one living being, and this living being we exclude from every other.

We know that a man on horseback is not a number of beings, and is not one being, not because we observe all the parts, constituting the man and the horse, but because neither in the head, nor in the legs, nor in the other parts of the man and the horse do we see that separate striving after good which we know in ourselves. And we know that the man and the horse are not one, because we know in them two separate aspirations towards good, while in ourselves we know only one.

Only from this do we know that there is life in the combination of horse and rider, because there is life in a drove of horses, that there is life in birds, in insects, in trees, in the grass. But if we did not know that the horse and the man each desired his own happiness, that each horse in the drove desired this separately, that such happiness is desired by every bird, beetle, insect, tree, and blade of grass, we should not perceive separateness in the being, and, not perceiving separateness, we could never have understood anything living; and a regiment of cavalry, and a flock, and birds, and insects, and plants, — all would be like waves in the sea, and all the world

would melt together for us into one inseparable movement, in which we could not, by any possibility, find the secret of life.

If I know that the horse and the dog and the tick that lives upon him are living beings, and if I can observe them, it is only because the horse and the dog and the tick have each their separate aims, — the aim of each being his own happiness. I know this because I know myself as an individual striving after the same happiness.

In this striving after happiness also lies the foundation of every knowledge of life. Without a confession that this striving after good, which man feels within himself, is life, and an image of all life, no study of life is possible, and no observation of life is practicable. And hence, observation begins when life is already known, and no observation upon the manifestations of life can (as it appears to scientific man) define life itself.

Men do not recognize the definitions of life in the striving towards happiness which they find in their consciousness, but they recognize the possibility of the knowledge of this striving in the tick, and on the foundation of the supposititious knowledge, founded upon nothing at all, of

this happiness towards which the tick is striving, they make observations and draw deductions even as to the very existence of life.

My every conception as to external life is founded upon the knowledge of my striving towards happiness. And therefore, having merely confessed in what my happiness and my life consist, I shall be in a condition to recognize in what consist the happiness and life of other beings. But the happiness and life of other beings I cannot in any way know without having acknowledged my own.

Observations upon other beings, striving towards their aims, which are unknown to me, constituting semblances of that happiness the striving after which I know in myself, not only can explain nothing to me, but can certainly hide from me my true knowledge of life.

For to study life in other beings which have not definitions of their life is the same as describing a surrounding district without having got its centre. Only after having fixed upon an immovable point as a centre can the region be described. But, whatever figures we might draw, without a centre there will be no surrounding district.

APPENDIX II.

FALSE science studying the manifestations which accompany life, and assuming to study life itself, by this assumption distorts the idea of life, and hence, the more it studies the manifestations of that which it calls life, the further it gets from the idea of life, which it wishes to study.

At first mammals are studied, then the other creatures, vertebrates, fishes, plants, corals, cells, microscopic organisms, and the matter is carried to such a point that the distinction between living and non-living, between the bounds of organism and of non-organism, between the bounds of one organism and another, are lost.

It is carried to such a point that what cannot be observed seems to be the most important subject of investigation and observation. The secret of life and the explanation of everything seems to lie in comma-shaped and other bacilli, which are not visible, but which are rather assumed, which

are discovered to-day and forgotten to-morrow. The explanation of everything is assumed in those beings which are contained in microscopic beings, and those which are also contained in even these, and so forth, to infinity, as though infinite activity of the little is not the same as infinite activity of the great.

The mystery will be revealed when all the infinity of the small shall have been investigated to the end, that is to say, never. And men do not see this — that the idea that the question will attain solution in the infinitely small is an indubitable proof that the question is wrongly stated. And this, the last stage of folly — that which clearly demonstrates the utter loss of sense in the investigation, — this stage is regarded as a triumph of science ; the last degree of blindness appears the highest degree of vision. Men have come to their wits' end, and have thereby clearly proved to themselves the falsity of that path along which they have been journeying ; and there are no limits to their rapture. If we can only increase the power of the microscope a little more, we shall understand the conversion of the inorganic into the organic, and of the organic into the

psychic, and the whole mystery of life will be laid open to us.

Men who study shadows instead of objects have entirely forgotten the object which they were studying, and, plunging deeper and deeper into the shadows, they have reached utter darkness, and rejoice because the shadow is so dense.

The meaning of life is revealed in the consciousness of man as a striving after good. The elucidation of this good, the more complete definition of it, constitutes the chief aim and work of the life of all mankind, and because this labor is difficult, that is to say, not a plaything but toil, men come to the conclusion that the definition of this good (or happiness) cannot be found in that place where it is situated, that is to say, in the rational consciousness of man, and that, therefore, it is necessary to seek it everywhere, — except where it is indicated.

This is something of the sort that a man would do, who had been given an accurate list of all that he required, and who, not knowing how to read it, should fling aside the list, and inquire of every one whom he met whether they did not know what he needed ; for men seek everywhere, except in the

consciousness of man itself, for the definition of life, which is inscribed in the soul of man in ineffaceable letters, in his aspiration for happiness. This is all the more strange because all mankind, in the persons of its wisest representatives, beginning with the Greek saying which runs, "Know thyself," has uttered it, and continues to utter it in precisely the opposite sense. All religious teachings are nothing else than a definition of life as a striving towards that active happiness which is accessible to man, and which cannot lead astray.

APPENDIX III.

Ever more and more clearly does the voice of reason become audible to man; ever more and more frequently does man lend an ear to this voice; and the time will come, and has already come, when this voice has grown stronger than the voice summoning to personal happiness, and to delusive duty.

On the one hand, it becomes ever clearer that the life of personality, with its enticements, cannot be happiness; on the other hand, that the payment of every debt prescribed by men is only a deceit, which deprives man of the possibility of settling the only debt of man, — that rational and honorable origin from which he proceeds. That recent delusion which demands a belief in the idea that we have no rational explanation has already been worn out, and it is impossible to return to it.

Formerly, men said: "Do not think, but believe in the duty which we prescribe. Reason will de-

ceive you; faith alone will open to you the true happiness of life." And man tried to believe, and did believe; but his relations to people proved to him that other men believed in something entirely different, and asserted that this other something gave greater happiness to man. The decision of the question has become inevitable, as to which faith — out of many — is the more true; but reason alone can decide this.

Man will always know all things through his reason, and not through faith. It might be possible to deceive by affirming that he will know all things through faith; but as soon as man knows two faiths, and sees men confessing another faith, just as he does his own, he is placed under the inevitable necessity of deciding the matter by his reason. A Buddhist, on becoming acquainted with Mahometanism, if he remains a Buddhist, will remain a Buddhist by faith no longer, but by reason. As soon as another faith has been presented to him, and the question as to whether he is to abandon his own faith, or the one offered him, — that question is inevitably settled by the reason. And if, on becoming acquainted with Mahometanism, he has remained a Buddhist, his

former blind faith in Buddhism is now infallibly founded on a basis of reason.

Attempts in our day to instil spiritual matters into man by faith, while ignoring his reason, are precisely the same as attempts to feed a man and ignore his mouth.

Man's common nature has proved to them that they all have a common foundation of knowledge, and men can never more return to their former errors; and the time is coming, and is even now come, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and, hearing, shall be made alive.

It is impossible to drown that voice, because that voice is not the single voice of any one person, but the voice of all the rational consciousness of mankind, which is expressed in every separate man, and in the best men of mankind, and now already in the majority of men.

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